Number FOUR Summer 1981 $2.95

Fanfare

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HUCKLEBERRY

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RAYMOND CHANDLER
LOS ANGELES
ARCHITECTURE
AS A BLUEPRINT
FOR FICTION

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POPULAR ARTS

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OF THE TWIN
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THE PULP ART OF
GRAHAM INGELS

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CRIME DOES NOT PAY
CHARLES
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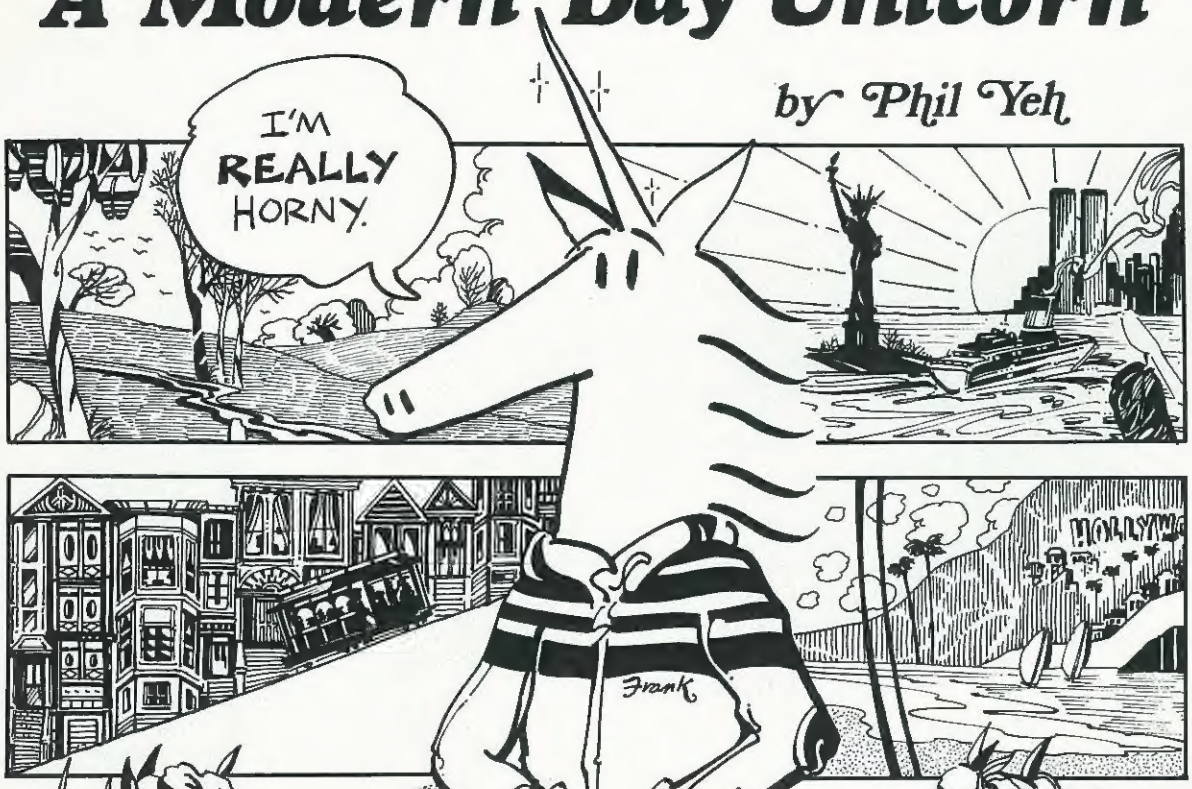
STORYTELLER

NEWAVE
1980s:
COMIX IN
REVOLUTION

Vargas

The Adventures of A Modern Day Unicorn

by Phil Yeh



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Fanfare

The Magazine of Popular Culture and the Arts

CONTENTS	PAGE
SHORT SUBJECTS	2
LOS ANGELES ARCHITECTURE AS A BLUEPRINT FOR FICTION David M. Fine	9
RAISING CAIN David M. Fine	12
A HOUND CALLED HUCKLEBERRY John Cawley, Jr.	14
STEREO VISIONS: 3-D AND THE POPULAR ARTS Ray Zone	18
Special Insert: SPAWN OF THE TWIN PLANETS—THE PULP ART OF GRAHAM INGELS Bhob Stewart	
THE ILLUSTORIES OF CHARLES BIRO Art Scott	25
CHARLES BIRO'S TOPS Bill Spicer	35
NEWAVE 1980s: COMIX IN REVOLUTION Clay Geerdes	36
VARGAS Sal Manna	40
FANFARE FORUM	43

FRONT COVER: Hanna-Barbera's inimitable Huckleberry Hound.

BACK COVER: "Beauty and the Beast" by Alberto Vargas, 1925.

THIS PAGE: Jessica Lange in Paramount's 1981 remake of *The Postman Always Rings Twice.*

INSIDE BACK COVER: Graham Ingels art from the Fiction House pulp magazine *Planet Stories* (Spring 1944 issue) illustrating "The Avenger" by Stuart Fleming.

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Short Subjects

SLAUGHTERHOUSE JIVE

By JONATHAN PEARL

For some time now, fans of the late British stage and screen villain Tod Slaughter (1885-1956) have led an underground existence. Life imitating art, you say? Not quite. While we revel in watching the dastardly deeds of Squire Corder, Sir Percival Glyde and numerous other rogues, few of us have seen fit to follow in their clandestine footsteps.

But the fact must be faced. Tod Slaughter isn't everybody's cup of arsenic. To fully enjoy his films, one must admittedly be able to overlook excess amounts of ham and hokum. After all, the Victorian melodramas favored by Slaughter were considered old hat even forty years ago. His 1935 *Maria Marten* was the fifth time this venerable tale of wicked and lecherous Squire Corder had been filmed. No one cared or seemed to be aware that Slaughter's performance would prove to be the definitive one.

Unappreciated in his native England and almost unheard of elsewhere, Tod Slaughter is known today only to students of esoterica and insomniacs who watch for his movies on the Late, Late, Show. In *The Filmgoer's Companion,* Leslie Halliwell dismisses Slaughter's whole career in a single sentence. Some of the more aware film critics have tried to champion Slaughter's works, but have met with little success.

And then, in late 1978, there suddenly appeared some hope for the cause. Rumors from New York spoke of composer Stephen Sondheim preparing a musical version of Slaughter's stock in trade, *Sweeney Todd (The Demon Barber Of Fleet Street).* Slaughter had filmed this chestnut in 1936 and continued to play the lead role on stage up until his death twenty years later.

The success of Sondheim's musical would no doubt spark a full scale Slaughter renaissance, we fans believed — Tod Slaughter finally elevated to his rightful place as one of the cinema's evil immortals. No more staying up until all hours to watch used car advertisements butcher continuity of films. From now on public television would present a weekly Tod Slaughter Theatre, complete with scholarly introductions by Alistair Cooke.

Hilary Eaves and Tod Slaughter in MARIA MARTEN (MURDER IN THE RED BARN).

The opening act of Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd,* however, dashed all such fanciful hopes. The former child prodigy of Broadway had composed a bloody opera. Instead of Slaughter's colorful monologues, *("You have a beautiful throat for a razor, sir. Oh, I should love to polish you off."),* the libretto subjects audiences to a series of dreary recitatives contemplating the morality and cruelty of mankind:

There's a hole in the world
Like a great black pit
And the vermin of the world
Inhabit it
And its morals aren't worth
What a pig could spit
And it goes by the name of London

While theatre critics grappled with the issue of *Sweeney Todd* having an elitist appeal, Tod Slaughter fans shook their heads at the way the actor's masterwork was transformed into an allegory about the inequities of the 19th Century British social order.

Clearly it is time for some one to stand up for the master of the nefarious and scourge of the provinces.

In examining his work, one cannot possibly separate Slaughter from the characters he portrayed. *The Crimes of Stephen Hawke* opens with a mock radio interview with Slaughter who refuses to come out of character. He details the thousands of crimes and murders he has committed — a heartwarming spectacle. It could very well be the mythical Sweeney Todd, gloating over all the lovely throats he's polished off in his combination barber shop and charnel house.

Slaughter dominated every scene of every production he appeared in. In his films the tired argument of whether the director or scriptwriter is responsible for the picture's outcome is thrown out the window. Slaughter alone determined the movie's tone and feeling.

Slaughter was equally imposing from all camera angles. From a distance, his brutish frame seemed always in danger of bursting the seams of the period costumes he wore. Slaughter up close made for an unreal sight, his hippo-sized jawbone giving the impression of a no-necked monster.

In his seventy-one years Tod Slaughter played only three characters: murderers, morally and financially bankrupt noblemen, and sadistic judges. Quite often his part was a composite of the three basic types, as was the role played by Vincent Price in *Dragonwyck.* Purists will argue that this 1946 opus reaches a level of class far above anything campy old Slaughter achieved. Maybe so. Slaughter, however, was more consistent in his material than Price, not to mention Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi. He never disappointed his faithful by participating in the feeble spoofs *(Ghost In The Invisible Bikini)* and outright sludge *(Dr. Phibes Rises Again)* that mar the output of Price and the others.

Sincerity was Slaughter's strong suit. Whether terrorizing an innocent chambermaid or cringing cowardly in front of the forces of justice, Slaughter was believable. This credibility enabled him to overcome hackneyed scripts and miniscule production budgets.

Slaughter's 1940 *Crimes At The Old Dark House,* stands as perhaps the best example of his talent and skill. Today's horror and suspense films rely on noise, garish photography, and other psychedelic gimcrackery for their effect. Tod Slaughter needed nothing more than his spine-chilling laugh to remind viewers that, despite all the implausible plot twists contained inside that dark house, they were watching the supreme master of homicide and melodrama at work.

TOD SLAUGHTER FILMOGRAPHY

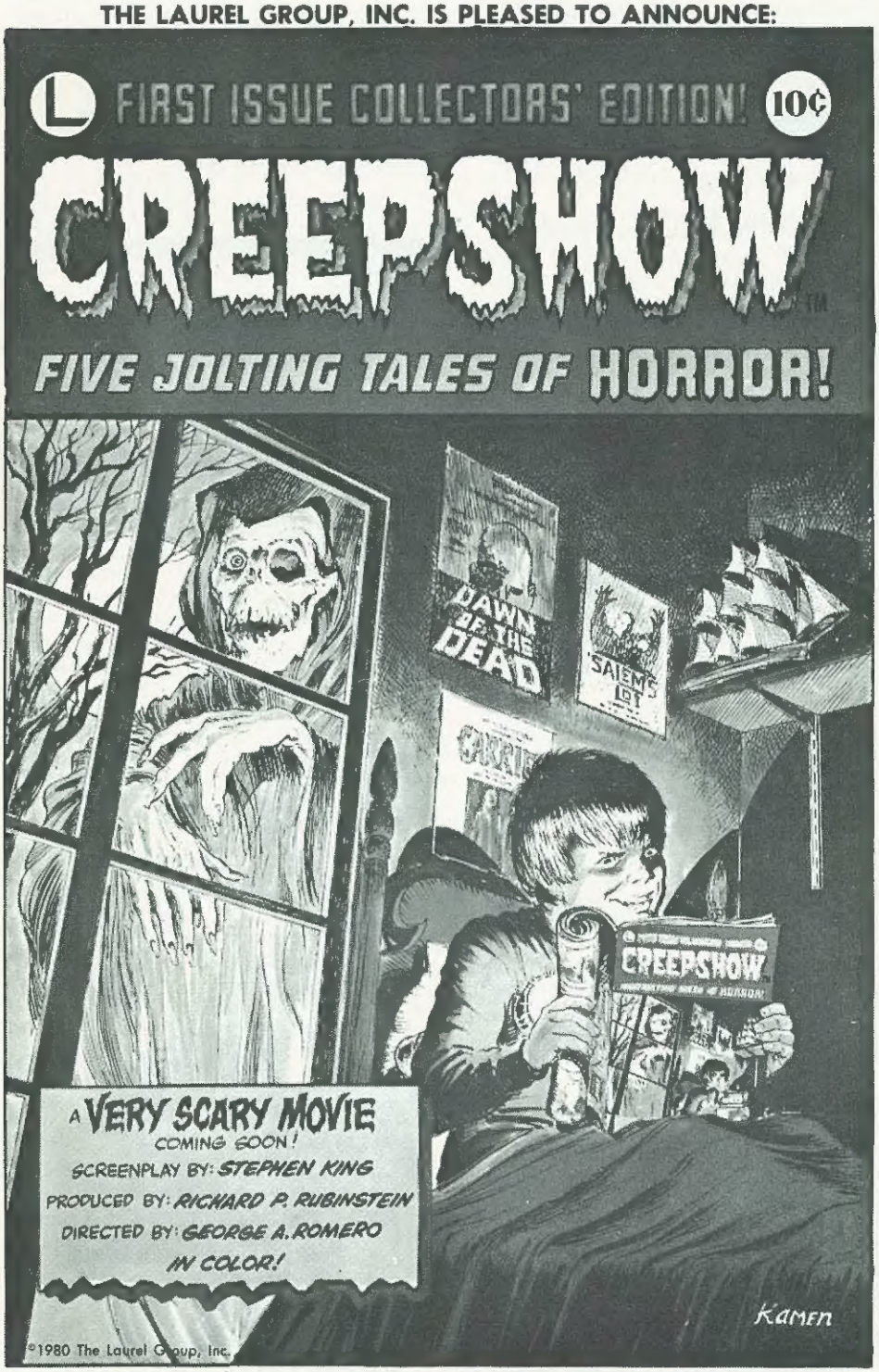
1935: Maria Marten (Murder In The Red Barn)
1936: Sweeney Todd (The Demon Barber Of Fleet Street)
1936: The Crimes Of Stephen Hawke
1937: Never Too Late To Mend
1937: The Ticket-Of-Leave Man
1938: Sexton Blake And The Hooded Terror
1939: The Face At The Window
1940: Crimes At The Old Dark House
1946: The Curse Of The Wraydons
1948: The Greed Of William Hart

Angela Lansbury and Len Cariou in a scene from the Broadway production.

NIGHT OF THE LIVING KAMEN

AL FELDSTEIN: "Jack's style was simple. Domestic, I would call it. He got all the stuff having to do with suburban love stories and romantic triangles. We plotted Kamen's story for Kamen, a Davis story for Davis. We kept in mind what they were best at. Kamen's style was apparent to us from the beginning, we knew he did interesting-looking gals, the style was clean and simple, but he couldn't really attain a gothic look that Ingels or Davis could."

For those who have wondered whatever happened to Jack Kamen, we reprint one of the more offbeat examples of his advertising work — a full-page promo for *Creepshow* that ran in the February 27th, 1980 *Variety*. Stephen King *(Salem's Lot, Carrie, The Shining)* and George Romero *(Night of the Living Dead, The Crazies, Dawn of the Dead)* are both self-professed EC fans, which no doubt accounts for the ad's horror comic design. Though Kamen never drew a horror cover for EC or anyone else, his *Creepshow* art is probably closer to it than anything he's done since he left comics 25 years ago. The scene isn't exactly EC-like (they had little use for ghosts or spectral skeletons), being more reminiscent of supernatural covers for ACG's *Adventures Into the Unknown*. But one aspect of the illustration does bring to mind an EC science fiction story: the idea of a comic book scene duplicated within itself *ad infinitum* was used to good effect on the final page of "The Aliens," from *Weird Fantasy* #17 (January-February, 1953) drawn by Al Williamson.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SQUA TRONT!
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PLANTATION PANCAKES

By BHOB STEWART

Aunt Jemima is dead. Ethel Ernestine Harper, who served a lot of Quaker Oats pancakes during the Fifties, died of a heart attack March 31, 1979, at the age of 75. Harper was seen as the jovial cook for seven years in the period just prior to the Civil Rights movement of the Sixties, a time when militant blacks argued that the Quaker Oats packaging was perpetuating a plantation stereotype.

It all started back in 1889 when the vaudeville team of Baker and Farrell sang the song "Aunt Jemima" in St. Joseph, Missouri, where newspaperman Chris Rutt had just devised the first pancake mix — which he sold in plain brown paper bags. Noting that St. Joe residents had made the "Aunt Jemima" song #1 with a bullet, Rutt immediately perceived the packaging potential. But he lacked the dough to promote Aunt Jemima Pancake Mix, so he sold out to the Davis Milling Company. The Davis Co. set to work building an immense flour barrel, measuring 16 feet in diameter, which they displayed at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. A well-known Kentucky cook, Nancy Green, who specialized in pancakes, set up shop at the base of the barrel where she prepared and served over 1,000,000 pancakes during the fair. She was such a successful attraction that police were needed to control the crowds; buyers placed 50,000 orders for the mix and Green continued to appear as Aunt Jemima for years at different expositions around the country. She died from injuries in

One of the Quaker Oaks Company's famous trademarks, Aunt Jemima

a 1923 car accident when she was 89 years of age. Two years later the Quaker Oats Company acquired the mills and the famed product, along with the "living trademark" concept.

Even before Nancy Green's death the public became aware of another Aunt Jemima, a "real" one. This was the musical comedy performer, billed only as Aunt Jemima, who radiated good humor and gusto while appearing in the familiar gingham dress and apron with her hair in a kerchief. She was on Broadway in *George White's Scandals of 1921*, and then pancake consciousness was heightened considerably when the *Aunt Jemima Revue* toured the United States in 1924, 1925 and 1926. The jazz violinist and novelty/rhythm vocalist Stuff Smith was part of this revue; another musician who backed Aunt Jemima's singing was Dixieland drummer Danny Alvin. The "Aunt Jemima Stomp" was recorded by the Kansas City Tin Roof Stompers on the Brunswick label.

In 1927 Aunt Jemima returned to Broadway in the Hammerstein-Kern *Show Boat*, repeating this role in the 1929 "all-talking" film version. She can also be seen in the 1934 *Stand Up and Cheer* (the movie in which a tiny Shirley Temple sang the "Baby Take a Bow" number that brought her initial fame).

Ethel "Aunt Jemima" Harper was also a singer-entertainer. Orphaned at 9, she grew up in Alabama, living with her brother and his wife. She graduated from college at 17, taught school and then moved to New York, appearing in such productions as *The Negro Follies* and the 1939 *Hot Mikado* with Bill Robinson. Harper was one of the singers in the Three Ginger Snaps group which toured Europe, creating a sensation in Italy. After her seven-year stint as Jemima during the Fifties, she was active with the Morris County (New Jersey) Girl Scout Council for 12 years while living in Morristown. She was also involved in entertainment and nutrition programs for the aged, while hosting a local radio show, *Youth Speaks Out; Age Speaks Out: Are You Listening?*

Ethel Harper as "Aunt Jemima" entertains at a revival session in STAND UP AND CHEER.

A SPACE ARK GROWS IN MICHIGAN

Forrest J. Ackerman:

"The Director of the Michigan Space Center (a $20 Million Complex) has presented this proposal to the Mayor's Office in Los Angeles in conjunction with my offer to the City of my Collection. My ghod, you should see what this man envisions — a Space Ark resembling nothing so much as the Mothership from CLOSE ENCOUNTERS:"

ARK is a proposed international entertainment and educational center for the collection, preservation, exhibition and study of SCIENCE FICTION. This $75 million dollar entertainment-educational center is planned for opening in 1987 and will contain over $80 million dollars in rare science fiction and unique science fact exhibits and displays.

The ARK will contain the great exhibit hall and Ackerman Wing, experience theater, imagination corridor, miniscan theaters, gallery rooms, preservation library and feature the Science Fiction Hall of Fame.

Visitors will participate in and view the world's largest collection of science fiction artifacts ever assembled in the great hall and Ackerman Wing.

ARK will honor past, present and future men and women in the ever-expanding Hall of Fame.

ARK portrays in the Imagination Corridor through industrial exhibits, the role of how creative thinking often leads from science fiction to science fact.

The Experience Theater will present unique and exciting audience controlled cliff-hanger visual programs.

ARK will contain Miniscan Theaters where a variety of classic science fiction movies are shown throughout the day, often with guest appearances.

Gallery Rooms will line the sides of the great hall where individual exhibit subjects can be explored in depth.

The Science Fiction Preservation Library will care for the restoration of science fiction films and exhibit materials.

CHARLES E. GASS
Director MICHIGAN SPACE CENTER
Jackson Community College

IS IT LIVE OR IS IT MEMOREX?

The truth is that film and tape together have deprived television of what in its infancy was one of its principal glories, its spontaneity. There once was the possibility always that the refrigerator door would fall off during the commercial (and once, if I remember correctly, did), or the live actor would have his memory go dead in mid-soliloquy, or the blank would not fire at the critical moment, or the talk show talk would turn lurid.

Not the least of the appeal of TV sports is that they are *happening*. The tape delays always lose me because the events *already* happened. "The Johnny Carson Show" *seems* to be happening, even though you know there is a three-hour or so tape delay during which the taste-savers can impose a bleeping vow of silence on the unruly. All else is canned, pasteurized, safe.

—Charles Champlin,
Los Angeles Times, April 16, 1980

VOGUE PICTURE RECORDS

By PAUL HEMMER

During the past year several major record companies released high priced collectors editions of top selling LPs complete with a color photograph of the artist imprinted under the vinyl. The Beatles, Bee Gees, Linda Ronstadt and Rod Stewart are just four subjects of this new wave of picture records. But the colorful illustrations visible through the transparent surfaces of phonograph records is an idea 35 years old.

It was September of 1945 that a young Detroit manufacturer named Tom Saffady revealed to the press his plans for Vogue Picture Records made with a central core of aluminum on which was placed a colorful paper illustration and then sealed inside a clear vinyl coating which was then impressed with the record grooves.

The first Vogue was a sample pressing of "Rum and Coca Cola" by Jackie Heller and "On a Little Street in Singapore" by The Glenn Miller Orchestra.

The roster of recording artists for this new label included a rising young bandleader, Art Mooney, Phil Spitalny and his "Hour of

Don Brown *Jazz man Record Shop*

Charm" Orchestra, Clyde McCoy, and Art Kassel. The *Your Hit Parade* star Joan Edwards was also a part of the talent to first record for this unique company.

Vogue took out extensive national advertising to hype their product and on May 6, 1946 the first Vogue Picture Record went on sale at Gimbel's in New York. Vogue discs sold for $1.05 each, slightly more than twice the price of standard records on Victor, Decca, Columbia or other labels. But the interest was there. People began buying Vogue and Tom Saffady thought he had a winner. But after the novelty wore off, sales began to slump. Several major talents, including Shep Fields and The Frankie Masters Orchestra, failed to renew their one year contract with the fledgling label. That, coupled with a constant shortage of vinyl, slowed sales to a minimum. Another problem was the lack of hits. As 1947 wore on the public continued to buy Vogues, but not in sufficient quantity to put them on the charts. By July the Detroit pressing plant started taking on outside jobs for Mercury and other independent labels to keep their personnel busy. In August the demise of this short lived label became evident when a liquidation ad appeared in *Billboard.*

Most of the records' pictures are almost cartoon-like in appearance. "Basin Street Blues" shows a street in New Orleans complete with a sidewheel steamer passing by and banjo strumming blacks plus a black dude tipping his hat to a passing lady on the sidewalk. For "Warsaw Concerto" we see a group of European-type buildings lying in rubble with bright red-orange flames leaping in the background.

Does anyone actually play the discs in their collection? Yes, and no. The audio quality is quite good because of the vinyl pressing. But the typical collector hangs the illustrations on a wall of the rec room and basks in the oo's and ahh's of visitors who marvel at these records-with-pictures that are more of a hit today than when they first arrived on the scene in 1946.

Reprinted from and © 1980 by MEMORY LANE, PO Box 1627, Lubbock, Texas 79408

SUCCESS STORY

If anyone ever profited from her own mistakes it was Bette Claire Graham. A bank secretary and a free-lance artist, Mrs. Graham concocted in her kitchen in 1954 a fluid to paint over her typing errors. Using her knowledge of pigments and solvents, she "put some tempera waterbase paint in a bottle and took my watercolor brush to the office and used that to correct my mistakes," according to a recent interview.

She kept the invention to herself, but two years later the liquid she called "Mistake Out" was being used by all the secretaries in her building and an office supply dealer urged her to market it. But marketing agencies weren't impressed and she decided to sell the fluid on her own. She formed Liquid Paper Corp. and in a few months was filling orders from around the country for the tiny bottles of white paint equipped with a small brush.

Mrs. Graham died May 12, 1980, at age 56 of an undisclosed illness, having sold the firm last November to the Gillette Co. for $47.5 million. At the time of her death those tiny white bottles were earning $3.5 million annually on sales of $38 million.

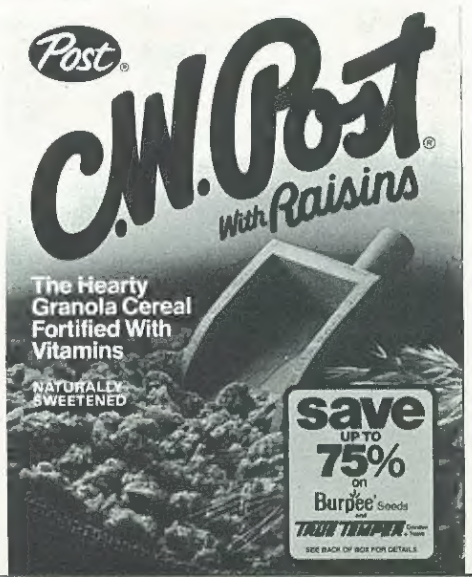
HOLLYWOOD STORY

Variety (1/5/55): Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne made only one Hollywood film, *The Guardsman* (1931). Good, too, but they were not satisfied. Miss Fontanne was the first to see the early rushes of the film. She sped back to the Beverly Hills Hotel, burst into their suite, where her husband was reading, and broke into tears. "Alfred. . . Alfred," she wailed, "I've seen the rushes—and we're ruined. Ruined! You photograph without lips, and I come out old and haggard and ugly and my tongue is thick and I lisp and fall against the furniture. I look like I don't know my lines, and my feet are big and my clothes hang to me like from a clothesrack and. . ."But she couldn't go on, so great were her tears. Lunt pondered a moment and then muttered: "No lips, eh?"

ORIGIN STORY

Seventy-five years ago C.W. Post came out with what's believed to be the first coupon scheme in the United States, when he printed in the local newspaper in Battle Creek, Mich., a coupon offering a free cup of Postum, which then sold for a nickel.

From this beginning coupon promotions have mushroomed into a multi-million-dollar business.



HYPING TARZAN

In 1948, when Jack Harris was still an East Coast film huckster, he got his hands on the 1935 production of *The New Adventures of Tarzan.* ("The only one that Edgar Rice Burroughs ever actually had a hand in writing himself," Harris says.) He could have bought some radio time or hired some one to hang around outside the theaters in gorilla suits. Instead, he hyped it the Harris way. "Trenton (N.J.) was winter quarters for the Hunt Brothers circus, so I got an elephant from them and brought Tarzan in on a biplane that landed at a little private airport on the edge of town. Tarzan gets out of the plane and rides the elephant to the theater. He climbs up on the marquee and we got it fixed so he can swing up to the second story of the theater where the projectionist is waiting for him. Tarzan hands the projectionist a big white empty film can with *Tarzan* written across it in big black letters," Harris recounts. Every newspaper photographer with nothing better to do on a winter afternoon in 1948 in Trenton was waiting below the marquee when Tarzan turned over the film can to the projectionist.

THE BEAT GOES ON

Disco music has a beat which repeats heavily in the base—4/4 with about 120 beats per minute. When speakers are placed near the floor, resonance is such that even deaf people can dance to the heavy beat. Lyrics can range from the romantic to the obscene, with certain phrases continually repeated. The records themselves are technical masterpieces of overdubbing and electronic mixing. A good disc jockey can create almost any psychological mood he wants. By placing the right songs in a certain order, he can bring people to a frenzy or tranquilize them.

Most disco music tends to focus each dancer's attention on himself, a form of exhibitionism. The self-indulgence manifested in this type of activity reflects a narcissism which preaches that "anything I want is all right, no matter how it affects anyone else."

In examining disco's roots, it may surprise some to know that over 50 percent of the discos in this country are gay. Also, the earliest

roots of disco came from Africa. What was the purpose of this type of music? African natives danced these wild dances to exorcise demons and to ask the earth for a good crop. Some were danced during the spring as fertility rites. It was part of a display of worship to pagan gods. At times, the frenzy became so intense that a young virgin would be sacrificed to appease the gods. Disco dancing today may not include actively worshipping other gods, but it does allow one's mind to go blank. Dancers often seem to leave their bodies. Many voodoo worshippers, the Brazilian Macumba and Kalahari Bushmen, felt that they were at one with a larger cosmic energy force. They also would lose self-awareness and become part of their surroundings. Should we be copying the ancient dances used to appease or worship pagan gods?

—F. SMITH, Reno, Nevada

MAMIE VAN DOREN THEN AND NOW

Hollywood in the 1950s presented the male moviegoer with two types of women: Doris Day, the girl you'd like to take home to mother, and Marilyn Monroe, the girl you'd just like to take home. Mamie van Doren, the blonde bombshell of the B feature, emerged in 1953 in the Marilyn Monroe mold. But unlike Monroe, who graduated from floozy bit parts to first-class roles, Mamie's starring roles in such films as "High School Confidential," "Three Nuts in Search of a Bolt," "Las Vegas Hillbillys," and a minor role in the Clark Gable-Doris Day movie "Teacher's Pet" never elevated her above second-feature fame.

Van Doren, 47, is out of the limelight, living in Newport Beach with her husband, a 34-year-old stereo store manager, and leading a leisurely beach life devoted to swimming, biking and chit-chat. Asked about her aborted film career, Van Doren said the only basic difference between her and Monroe "is that the studio backed her. . . and she was there first. I liked being sexy; I still like that," she said. "I would have liked to be appreciated more for my acting." Van Doren's view of her acting talent has been disputed by critics; one described her as an actress "whose dramatic forte is taking a bath." Van Doren was given the dubious distinction of a nomination as one of the four worst actresses of all time in Harry and Michael Medved's book, "The Golden Turkey Awards."

But there never was any dispute over Van Doren's talent for grabbing newspaper headlines. In 1963, the actress, who calls herself a "hawk Republican," offered to strip-tease to raise funds for the GOP ("I know they need the money," she said.) She publicized romances with several prominent athletes, including Jack Dempsey, Bo Belinsky and Tony Conigliaro. And in 1973, she stood before White House reporters on a slow news day and described her dinner date, Henry Kissinger, as "devastating."

Van Doren, still attractive, today seems simultaneously pleased with and uncomfortable about her naughty "girl who could melt the Cold War" image. She said in a recent interview in her home, she had been "ahead of her time." A minute later, she said she took the roles "only for a living."

—Los Angeles Times, June 16, 1980

ZIPPY FOR PRESIDENT

Words and photos by CLAY GEERDES

Zippy the Pinhead threw his hat in the ring, and he looked like the most promising cartoon presidential candidate since Howard the Duck ran in 1976. Zippy's creator Bill Griffith was on hand at the June 6 Zippy for President rally held at historic Sproul Plaza on the University of California campus in Berkeley. Among the supporters of Zippy were Paul "The Realist" Krassner, the Psychotic Pineapple (Berkeley's top rock band), the Tap Dancing Dills (five excellent pickles who doll up the street fairs), and hundreds of just plain stoned street people. Zippy appears in two issues of ZIPPY STORIES and two issues of YOW COMICS. He appears in color in each issue of HIGH TIMES and a black and white strip runs in various underground newspapers. Zippy for President t-shirts are carried by Last Gasp Comix, 2180 Bryant, San Francisco, 94110.

Zippy addresses the multitudes in historic Sproul Plaza as the Psychotic Pineapple salutes

Zippy and his creator, Bill Griffith

HOW CECIL B. DeMILLE PARTED THE RED SEA

Movie director Cecil B. DeMille used to joke that his cinematic parting and closing of the Red Sea surpassed God's miracle. "After all, I did it twice, and He didn't have any bankers or investors complaining about the costs," the director said. DeMille first filmed the spectacular feat for "The Ten Commandments" in 1923, then repeated it in color in 1956 for the remake. After finishing the second film, DeMille revealed the secret behind

his miracle: a blob of jello. One of his special effects men, Roy Pomeroy, placed a huge blob of ordinary gelatin on a large table equipped with special gas jets. Pomeroy aimed the jets at the center of the blob and turned them on, forcing the jello to separate and ooze outward. Meanwhile, DeMille prepared to shoot a scene on the beach at Guadalupe, Calif., that had to be filmed precisely at noon in order to avoid shadows that would show up on the film. At 11:45, with thousands of extras assembled and ready, DeMille suddenly became aware that something was missing. The beach looked just like a beach, not like the bottom of the sea. "I saw a bed of kelp floating near the shore. That was it!" DeMille said. "Stars, cameramen, musicians, extras — everyone plunged in with me to bring out and spread the kelp. In less than 10 minutes the path was ready for the Israelites." Two groups of extras—the Israelites and the Pharoah's army — were filmed running across the beach. Back in the laboratory, the beach scenes were then superimposed on the jello footage, and it appeared that the seas had parted to make way for the children of Israel. Pomeroy's jello footage was reversed as the Pharoah's army entered the passageway, and the walls of "water" engulfed them. In 1956 the production costs totaled $13.5 million, compared to $1.5 million back in 1923. Even the cost of miracles has soared.

UPDATING TUSSAUD'S CHAMBER

The public wants more blood, says Madame Tussaud's. So in 1980 London's famed wax museum opened a new Chamber of Horrors that is the most gory, ghoulish and gruesome in its 178-year history. For the first time, modern U.S. murderers are displayed — Utah killer Gary Gilmore before the firing squad, Charles Manson with his gang of girls and Bruno Richard Hauptmann strapped into the electric chair. For the devotees of London crime, a Victorian alleyway is littered with the victims of Jack the Ripper and other madmen.

"We were very aware that visitors were disappointed with the old Chamber of Horrors, that it wasn't frightening," spokesman Juliet Simpkin said. "People were just not finding it bloody enough. What we've done will probably fulfill what people want to see. It's pretty nasty — and probably a bit gory, too."

In the new Chamber of Horrors the execution bell from Newgate Prison rings every 20 seconds as visitors walk down the dimly lit stairs. The air chills as a dark 19th-century London street comes into view. Laughter and the clink of glasses are heard from The Ten Bells pub to the right. A prostitute beckons from the left. A scream rings out, and a bloodied body is seen. The shadowy figure of Jack the Ripper flees from his latest victim.

Preparing the displays of the U.S. murderers took months of research, including several trips to the Trenton, N.J., prison where Hauptmann was electrocuted in 1936 for the kidnap-murder of the Lindbergh baby. Gilmore's death scene was based on Playboy magazine articles and Norman Mailer's book The Executioner's Song. Manson, the only living American in the chamber, is surrounded by three of his girls, Susan Atkins, Leslie Van Houten and Patricia Kelwinkle. Their heads shaved, the girls wear 1960s dress, including a faded pair of jeans donated by a designer. The walls behind them are covered with "Pigs," "LSD" and other graffiti.

HOW GIRLS CARRY BOOKS

Dear Dr. Solomon:

I have noticed that almost the only way the girls on our campus carry their books is hugged to their chests, as though for dear life. Is this some new co-ed fad? Or is it some standing difference between the sexes? It's the first year we have had girls at our university, so this is quite a new way of looking at women for all of us here. —Jay W.

Well, you are in for something of an education, because hugging books to one's chest seems to be a widespread female practice. In fact, it has been noted in Montana, Ontario, New York, El Salvador and Costa Rica—just to mention a few of the many places—by two behavioral researchers at the University of Montana, Donald and Mary Jenni.

This team found that more than 9 college girls out of 10 wrap one or both arms around their books, which they clasp to their chests —or, occasionally, rest on their hips. Over 9 out of 10 college males carry books in one hand at their side. The load they happen to be carrying has no effect one way or the other.

Extending their research to younger students, the Jennis discovered that the majority of first-graders of both sexes start off with the side-carrying method. Girls shift progressively to the clasping technique, whereas boys remain steadfast side-carriers.

The Jennis think there are three factors at play. One is genetic: females tend to assume more closed positions than males, such as folding their arms or crossing their legs. The second is anatomical: differences in hip width and the angle of the lower arm makes one style more comfortable for females, the other for males. And the third factor is social: copying what older students are doing.

The Jennis say that when they started their research on carrying behavior, they found no reference to it in scientific literature. They note, however, that Mad Magazine had pioneered with a cartoon strip on it by D. Berg, back in 1975. *—Dr. Neil Solomon, from his column in the Boston Globe*

*From Dave Berg's "The Lighter Side of Graduation," **Mad** #176, July 1975*

BRITISH REPULSE BIG MAC ATTACK

LONDON (AP)—The golden arches of McDonald's apparently will not soar amid the stately homes in an exclusive northwest London suburb where an army of upper-middle class activists repulsed a "Big Mac" attack on one last stronghold of refinement. Although fast food has caught on in a big way in London, where there are 43 McDonald's restaurants alone, residents of Hampstead consider themselves just a bit more civilized. However, that did not prevent them from taking to their streets in an effort to stem the incursion of 20th Century eating habits. Carrying signs reading "Burger Off!" and singing original protest songs, thousands held anti-McDonald's rallies amid the trees and ponds of Hampstead Heath. More than 5,000 residents signed a protest petition, and another 463 wrote to the Camden Council. The council rejected McDonald's application to turn an empty store into a large 2-story restaurant with a staff of 120—a decision that left British executives of the U.S.-based hamburger empire in shock.

CANNED CONDOM

NEWPORT, Tenn. (AP)—A jury has ordered Stokely Van Camp Corp. to pay $2,500 to a man who found a prophylactic condom in a can of the company's pork and beans. The circuit court jury, in awarding damages to Carl Gentry of Newport, concluded that the company had breached its warranty. Gentry testified that he became physically ill after finding the condom when he opened an 8-ounce can of beans during a lunch break on Aug. 22, 1979.

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HERE

Los Angeles Architecture as a Blueprint for Fiction

By David M. Fine

Over the past few years, we have had such celebrated films as "Chinatown," "The Day of the Locust," "They Shoot Horses Don't They?," "The Fortune" and "The Last Tycoon." Late night television moreover, yields an endless round of vintage crime films which bring back the ambience of L.A. in the '30s and just after. The sleazy, violent night-world of Los Angeles in the Depression decade continues to seduce us not because we remember that world but because it reveals so much of our popular culture and betrays in its visual projections a large part of our daydreams, nightmares, fantasies and fears.

The images haunt us—dance marathons on the Santa Monica pier and luxurious gambling ships off Ocean Park, gaudy pleasure domes in the Hollywood Hills and seedy downtown bars, restaurants shaped like derby hats and nutburger stands on the highway, cultist temples and exotic cemetaries, garish movie palaces and the surreal backlots of the studios. The land is inhabited, according to the myth, almost exclusively by tough and glib private eyes and innocent, erotic good-bad girls; by fortune-hunters and thugs; by bit players and drugstore cowboys; and by prophets, divines and fanatics.

The myth, constructed from the images that crowd the novels and screenplays of dozen of writers drawn to the film capital in the '30s, serves as countermyth to that of Hollywood-as-golden-land perpetuated in the decade's most popular film products. The so-called Hollywood novel has always had as its central theme the radical disjunction be tween illusion and reality. Hollywood has been the metaphor for delusion, deception, facade. In contrast to the industry-fostered vision of the Southland as the mecca of youth, beauty, glamour, health and endless possibilities for success and happiness, the novelistic version has centered on loneliness, alienation, confusion and decay. The land is not a place of new beginnings and fresh starts, but of endings, a nightmare world in which the line between illusion and reality blurs and nothing and no one is as it appears.

The key fictional image for all of this has been the region's delusive architecture. When Nathanael West, Aldous Huxley and Scott Fitzgerald arrived in the mid-'30s, the Southland was undergoing a spectacular metamorphosis. The success of the film industry and the population boom of the '20s (the city's population more than doubled in the decade) spurred a building bonanza hardly slowed by the Depression. No architectural impulse dominated, and every conceivable manner, style and period found a place. The absence of a regional past with which the area's hundreds of thousands of new settlers could comfortably identify, together with a year-round mild climate, encouraged architectural experimentation and eclecticism. The exoticism of the films themselves was certainly an influence, too. Richard Neutra, the renowned modernist architect, complained in 1941 that "motion pictures have undoubtedly confused architectural tastes" and blamed them for such phenomena on the landscape as half-timber cottages alongside Spanish adobes, Arabian minarets and Georgian mansions. Aldous Huxley, similarly, wrote that "Hollywood always seems like a movie set" and that houses "look impermanent, as though they might be torn down at any moment and something else put up."

The assumption that motion pictures alone were responsible for the architectural anarchy obviously needs qualification. Sets reflected as well as influenced architectural taste, and the fact that many of the more active set designers and studio artists, men like the versatile Kem Weber, were also practicing architects argues for a reciprocal relationship. For the novelist, however, the important thing was not which way the influence ran but that architectural designs on and off the sets seemed at times hardly distinguishable. The writers looked around and saw such monuments to eclecticism—all put up between the mid-'20s and 1941—as the Samson Tire and Rubber Co. (now Uniroyal) designed in the shape of a vast Assyrian temple; the exotic Grauman's Chinese, Egyptian and Mayan theaters; the mission revival design of Union Station; the Roman Coliseum (built for the 1932 Olympics), the ocean liner-inspired "Crossroads of the World" shopping center; and the Coca-Cola Bottling Co., also designed in the shape of a giant, streamlined ocean liner.

On a less grand scale there were such message-oriented buildings as the Wilshire Blvd. camera store with an entrance in the shape of a giant lens, restaurants in the form of huge chili bowls, orange juice stands looking like enormous oranges, ice cream parlors shaped like igloos and mammoth owls ("Hoot Hoot I Scream") and an assortment of houses done up like Tudor manors, Medeival castles, Hansel and Gretel cottages and Moorish palaces.

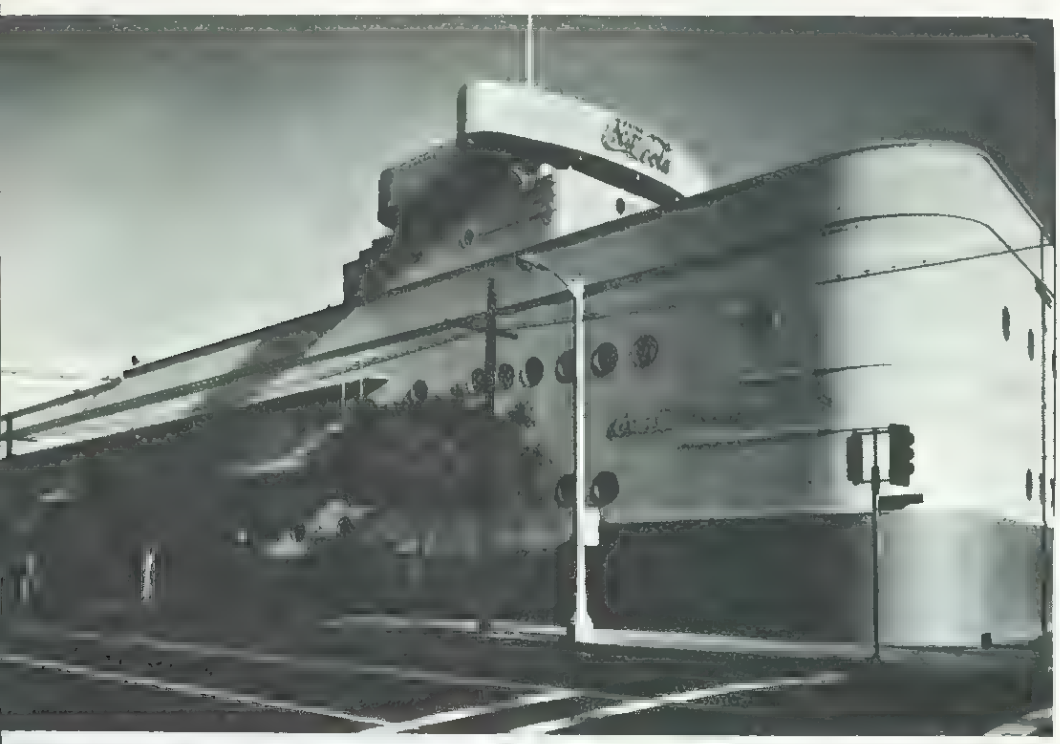
Movies may not entirely have been to blame, but it was evident that fantasies in the film capital were taking on architectural shape, providing a ready-made symbolism for the writer who wanted to convey a sense of the enormous disparity between illusion and reality, painted prop and solid ground. Most

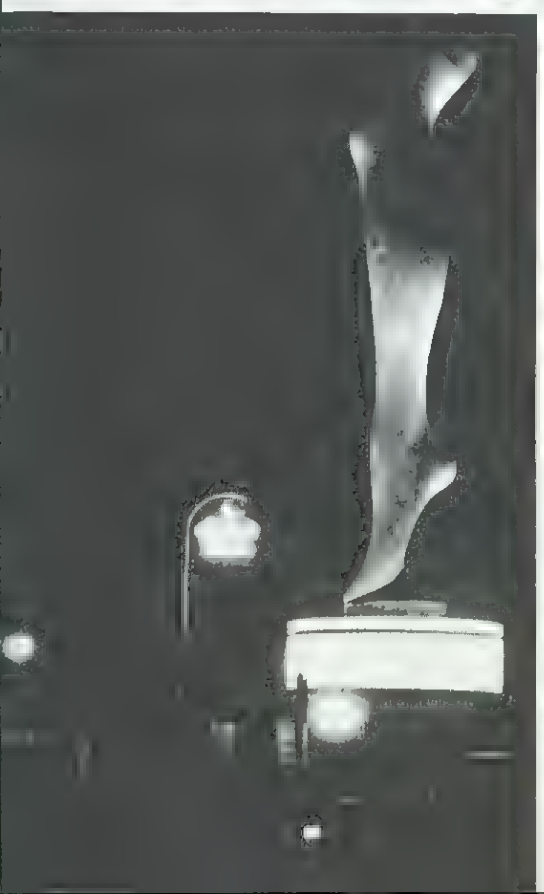
LEFT: 1950 premiere at the Carthay Circle Theatre, 6316 San Vicente Boulevard in West Los Angeles (built in 1926). RIGHT: Tail O' the Pup, 311 North La Cienega in West Hollywood (1947).

novels written about the Southland in the '30s appropriated such symbolism, but it was Huxley and West, among their contemporaries, who most doggedly insisted on the metaphoric connection between sham architecture and sham living in the film capital.

For both writers, delusive architecture served as the exact equivalent, the objectified and externalized counterpart, to their characters' obsessive roleplaying and masquerading. The architecture also symbolized for both writers the tragic misuse of talent and materials, the discrepancy between artistry and skill and the meritricious uses to which they are put.

Huxley's Hollywood novel, "After Many a Summer Dies the Swan," appeared the same year, 1939, as West's "The Day of the Locust" (a vintage year for the California novel, for it was also the year that Raymond Chandler published his first L.A. novel, "The Big Sleep," and another California novel, John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath," headed the best-seller lists). In Huxley's novel, Jeremy Pordage, a stuffy, middle-aged British scholar, has been brought to Los Angeles by old, decaying millionare Jo Stoyte to edit some rare manuscrpts he has acquired. He is met by a chauffeur at the train station and driven to his employer's mount aintop castle through an exotic landscape of churches, nutburger stands, restaurants shaped like bulldogs, a real estate office shaped like an Egyptian sphinx and signs hawking in giant letter mile-high cones, jumbo malts, health foods, cash loans and salvation. Among Stoyte's holdings is the vast cemetery, "Beverly Pantheon," and Huxley, anticipating his countryman Evelyn Waugh, makes capital of the Los Angeles-type cemetery—modeled on Forest Lawn but outstripping even that fantasy.





Coca Cola Bottling Company, 1334 South Central Avenue (1936-37).
Sanderson's Hosiery, 11711 Olympic (1948).
Hoot Hoot I Scream, 8711 Long Beach Boulevard (1930).

But the most fantastic structure in the novel, and the one which dominates it, is Stoyte's castle rising from a bluff overlooking the San Fernando Valley. Gothic with a vengeance, the building is "more Medieval than any building in the 13th century. . . Medieval as only a witty and irresponsible architect would wish to be Medieval, as only the most competent modern engineers are technically equipped to be." Like the cemetery, the castle, inspired by the Hearst Castle, is metaphor both for the misuse of talent and the pretense and masquerading of the novel's characters. There, the millionaire Stoyte plays the good samaritan (using a corner of his estate as an orphanage) while he is secretly engaged in buying up large chunks of the then-undeveloped valley when he gets advance information that water will be piped into the parched land.

In using the castle to symbolize both deception and artistic irresponsibility, Huxley makes the same use of architecture as does West. The difference here is West's much greater fidelity to the thing seen. He did not out-fantasize Los Angeles as did Huxley, but used the city pretty much as he found it, although he carefully selected and juxtaposed images to create a landscape which would serve as the symbolic representation of the pervasive roleplaying he found in the film capital—and, by extension, America.

The obsessive masquerading of the characters has its exact equivalent in the architecture. While the back lot— what West calls the "dream dump" and the "Sargasso of the imagination"—provided the most concentrated images of the architecture of illusion, the houses in Hollywood's canyons offered, acre upon acre, many more such images. As though the back lots weren't large enough to contain all the dreams, they spilled out onto the surrounding countryside, turning the whole region into a fantasyland.

In the opening of "The Day of the Locust," Tod Hackett, the novel's artist-hero, walks home through a canyon above Vine St., past "Mexican Ranch houses, Samoan huts, Mediterranean villas, Egyptian and Japanese temples, Swiss Chalets, Tudor cottages and every possible combination of the styles which lined the slope of the canyon." Tod's own apartment house, the San Bernardino Arms (the name itself an attempt to evoke the exotic) is the perfect metaphor for masquerade. The building is an oblong box three stories high, the sides of which are of unpainted stucco. The facade, though, is "the

color of diluted mustard and its windows, all double, were framed by pink Moorish columns which supported turnip-shaped lintels."

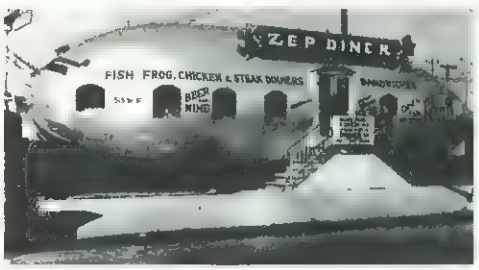
The novel's other houses reenforce the pattern of deception. Claude Estee, the tired, cynical screenwriter, lives in what is supposed to be "an exact reproduction of the old Dupuy mansion in Biloxi, Miss." We see him teetering back and forth on his veranda shouting to his Chinese servant, "Here you black rascal! A mint julep" while from the bottom of his swimming pool a life-size rubber horse grins up at him. Homer Simpson lives in a canyon bungalow which features a crooked stone chimney, dormer windows, a thatched roof (the thatching made of fireproof paper), a gumwood door made to look like oak and enormous hinges stamped to look hand-forged. A Spanish masquerade takes over in the living room which is adorned with armorial banners, a plaster galleon, rubber and cork cactus and lampshades oiled to look like parchment.

The same kind of deception and illusion is contained in the commercial architecture. Homer shops at the Sun Gold Market, a brilliantly lit place where spotlights distort the natural hues of the foods, bathing the oranges in red, the fish in pale green and the steaks in rose. There is also the Cinderella Bar, shaped like an enormous slipper, where the entertainment is provided by female impersonators, and Kahn's Persian Palace—West's tribute to Grauman's Chinese Theater (with a nod to Coleridge's pleasure dome) . . . where the novel's violent climax takes place. Architecture, throughout the book, rivals and reenforces the performances of the characters.

The fantasy architecture which both West and Huxley discovered in the Southland offered itself as the key metaphor for the disparity between illusion and reality, and the breakdown of traditional values and artistry in the face of an industry which mass-produced dreams. Hollywood epitomized America, both writers believed; it was just a little ahead of the rest of the nation. "The Angelenos would be first," Tod Hackett says, "but their comrades all over the country would follow."

This perhaps is why we are haunted today by screen and novelistic images of Los Angeles in the '30s. More than glimpses of a specific place at a specific time, the fantasy images are still with us. We are still constructing our facades, still building restaurants like Polynesian huts, fast food outlets like Spanish missions and Alpine chalets, tract houses like Georgian manors and shopping centers like Mediterranean villas. What, one wonders, would Huxley or West have done with these. As Tod Hackett remarked, "It is hard to laugh at the need for beauty and romance. . . few things are sadder. . ." □

Fine teaches English and American studies at Cal State Long Beach and is the author of a book, "The City, the Immigrant and American Fiction," and articles on American urban fiction.



The Dog Cafe, 1153 West Washington (1928).
Sphinx Realty, 537 North Fairfax (1926).
The Hollywood Flower Pot (1930).
Ben-Hur Coffee Pot, 8531 Wilshire (1930).
Zep Diner, 515 West Florence Avenue (1930).

Abandoned movie set in Los Angeles, exact location unknown (circa 1949).

Raising Cain

James M. Cain

For literary critic Edmund Wilson, James M. Cain headed the list of West Coast "tough guy" writers he called "The Boys in the Back Room" in a 1940 group review. Cain had come to Los Angeles in 1931 to work as a screenwriter. At that time he had published only one novel wholly about the region, "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (1934). Still to come were "Mildred Pierce" (1941) and "Double Indemnity" (published serially in 1936 and in book form in 1943). "Serenade," a 1937 novel, has some major scenes in Los Angeles but it set largely in Mexico and New York. Although Cain's career as a novelist continued for several more decades into the 1970s, he is best remembered today for his three L.A. novels.

The three were combined in 1969 in a Knopf hardcover edition as "Cain X 3" with a roguish introduction by Tom Wolfe; recently the trio has reappeared, among other Cain titles, in separate Vintage paperback editions. Film versions of all three, made in the mid-'40s, have become film noir cult pieces, on late-night television, on campuses and on revival circuits. "Postman," filmed in 1946, is now being remade with Jack Nicholson taking the role made famous by John Garfield. "Postman," the novel, moreover, provided the storyline for Luchino Visconti's "Ossessione" (1942), the film recognized as a chief source of Italy's neo-realism cinema. Cain, thus, was an important influence on the first significant new trend in postwar filmmaking.

Like the other boys in the back room, Cain wrote about where the myth of a new Eden on the coast collided head-on with realities of the Depression. David Madden, author of the only full-length study of Cain, said the writer "was interested in the way the high hopes of the westward movement collapsed...in the vacant glare of a sunlight that gilds the cheapest artifacts of transient American technology." West's 1939 novel, "The Day of the Locust," has given us, perhaps, the single most powerful metaphor for the collapse of those hopes, but Cain pointed the way years earlier.

The reader coming to Cain for the first time is intrigued—if not dazzled—by the mass of details and seemingly factual information about a wide range of careers he dispenses in his fiction. Born and educated in Annapolis, Md., Cain tried a number of careers before coming west to try his hand as a screenwriter. He had been a high school teacher and principal, insurance salesman, journalist and even, for a brief time, a singer. His only real success came as a journalist. Throughout the '20s he wrote regularly for H.L. Mencken's American Mercury and, under Walter Lippmann, for Arthur Krock's New York World. He had a long string of articles (from reports on labor relations to the proper carving of a duck) in such magazines as the Nation, Saturday Evening Post, Atlantic Monthly, Esquire and Vanity Fair.

In the Twain-Crane-Dreiser-Hemingway tradition, Cain successfully made the leap from journalist to fiction although he never abandoned magazine writing. Journalism not only provided knowledge of a number of fields but, more significantly, helped him achieve compression, tautness and detached objectivity. Coupled with his sensational and brutal subject matter, those qualities characterize his writing and link him with the other "tough guy" writers of the period.

By the '30s, a detached, cynical stance had taken strong hold in fiction, film and drama, connecting such genres as: the "hard-boiled" detective fiction of Dashiell Hammett and the Black Mask school; the leftist proletarian fiction pioneered by Mike Gold (e.g., "Jews Without Money"); Broadway plays—Eugene O'Neill's "The Hairy Ape," Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur's "The Front Page," Robert Sherwood's "The Petrified Forest," Clifford Odets' "Waiting for Lefty"—and, of course, the gangster film.

In the '30s the gangster became the con-

591
The Famous Novel by the Author of
SERENADE and THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE
Mildred Pierce
JAMES M. CAIN
complete PENGUIN BOOKS unabridged

LEFT: John Garfield and Lana Turner in ***The Postman Always Rings Twice*** *(1946). ABOVE: Joan Crawford being questioned for murder in* ***Mildred Pierce*** *(1945). RIGHT: The 1948 paperback edition of Cain's novel, with a deceptively romantic cover. BELOW: Barbara Stanwyck and Fred MacMurray in* ***Double Indemnity*** *(1944).*

summate image of the American "tough guy." He served not only as metaphor for the breakdown of American society, but as hero who could master—even if only temporarily— an environment in which most Americans saw themselves as victims. The gangster was, in this sense, a hero of protest. W.R. Burnett's "Little Caesar" (1929) set the pattern. Mervyn LeRoy turned it into a film starring Edward G. Robinson in 1930—the first talking gangster film. The next year William Wellman made "Public Enemy" with James Cagney, and in 1932 "Scarface," starring Paul Muni and George Raft, was filmed. While Cain's novels—and their film versions—don't adhere to the formula of the gangster genre, they clearly reveal its influence. By 1934, when Cain wrote "Postman," he stepped into what had become a well-established "tough guy" tradition in fiction, on stage and in film.

Cain's L.A. novels express the collective fantasies of the Depression decade and turn these fantasies into nightmares. All his heroes and heroines are driven, self-destructively, by sexual passion or an overpowering desire for wealth. Cain's formula is to pit major characters against one another in a cycle of greed, lust and vengeance. There is never a chance they will get away with anything. As Cain explained it, "the reader is carried along... by his own realization that the characters cannot have their particular wish and survive, and his curiosity to see what happens to them."

"Postman" expresses the fable clearly. Cora Smith has won a beauty contest in Iowa and with it a trip to Hollywood. One of thousands who chased the dream in the '20s, she is one more of its victims in the age of sound. "And when I began to talk up there on the screen," she tells Frank, "they knew me for what I was, and so did I. A cheap Des Moines trollop, that has as much chance in pictures as a monkey has."

Frank Chambers is a drifter with no past, no possessions, no plans. He has tramped up the coast from Tijuana. "They threw me off the hay truck about noon," the first-person narrative begins, and from the opening page when he stumbles upon Cora at the Twin Oaks Tavern, a "roadside sandwich joint" near Glendale, we are off on a journey leading from passion to murder, to escape, to destruction. The Twin Oaks, where the pair make love and plot the murder that will secure the dream, is the perfect setting—the makeshift drive-in highway stop that combines a filling station, luncheonette, living quarters and "a half-dozen shacks they call an auto court." Obsolete now in an age of mass-produced Holiday Inns and TraveLodges, the Twin Oaks is the perfect Depression representation of the dream, the meeting place of mobility and domesticity.

But the road is the central metaphor. The murder is committed on a desolate road in the Malibu hills, and Cora is killed in an auto accident while Frank is rushing her to the hospital after a miscarriage. The road becomes the death route for Nick, for Cora and ultimately for Frank. The road leads nowhere, doubles back on itself, carrying Frank back into the past. Caught in the illusory freedom of the highway, he tells Cora, "I'm talking about the road. It's fun, Cora. I know every twist and turn it's got. And I know how to work it, too. Isn't that what we want? Just a pair of tramps, like we really are?" But Cora knows the road too and knows it leads nowhere. She wants to refurbish the Twin Oaks with striped awnings, outdoor tables and lanterns to attract highway traffic. She dreams the dream of material success, he of mobility and the open road. Both are versions of the American—the California—dream, embodying opposing images of home and highway, the two-car garage, the fast car in the fast lane.

Jack Nicholson as Frank Chambers and Jessica Lange as Cora Smith in the 1981 remake of ***Postman.***

Presenting his first L.A. protagonist as the unencumbered drifter with his romantic dream of the open road, Cain provided not only a powerful Depression image but introduced what was to become a dominant metaphor in L.A. fiction for the years ahead. the vast and varied Southern California terrain—foothill, canyon, shoreline, desert—gave regional novelists ready-made images of fluidity, mobility and a deceptive sense of freedom. The central figure in the L.A. novel became the man—or woman—in the driver's seat. Mildred Pierce and Walter Neff ("Double Indemnity") are constantly behind the wheels of their cars. Mildred transcends her environment when she drives; physical motion is translated into social power and sexual release. Cain tells us that "the car was pumping something into her veins, something of pride, of arrogance, of restrained self-respect that no talk, no liquor, no love could possibly give." "Double Indemnity" is a grand auto tour of Southern California, a fact not lost on Billy Wilder, who did the superb 1943 film version (from a script he co-authored with Raymond Chandler). Among Cain's contemporaries, only Chandler, particularly in "Farewell My Lovely," covered so much of the region's terrain. High-speed movement across an endless Southern California has been, since the era of Cain and Chandler, a recurring image. Examples are the detective novels of Ross MacDonald, Joan Didion's "Play It as It Lays," Roger Simon's "The Big Fix" and John Gregory Dunne's "True Confessions."

From "Postman" to the present, the automobile and the highway have symbolized the illusion of freedom in the dream-turned-nightmare local landscape. For Cain, who arrived soon after the Crash and remained beyond the Depression, the city came to represent the betrayed dreams of a whole nation. In the boom years hundreds of thousands had come to the western edge of the continent seeking new beginnings, open space, mobility, warm climate, renewed health and a piece of the wealth. The dream seemed within grasp. But where the dream was most fervently believed and appeared closest to realization, collapse was all the more painful. Cain gave us a sense of what it was like to work, dream and scheme in Los Angeles in the not-so-distant past. —D.M.F.

A HOUND CALLED HUCKLEBERRY

By JOHN CAWLEY, JR.

MODEL SHEET DRAWINGS BY DICK BICKENBACH

© Hanna-Barbera Productions

Rin Tin Tin and his pack of canine comrades have been running to the rescue since the dawn of film, saving various heroes, heroines, and (in the case of Rin Tin Tin), Warner Brothers Studios. Animation was also saved by a dog—not surprising for a genre brought to life by a mouse.

The incident took place in the late fifties. Things were going from bad to bankrupt as studios dropped their animation departments. Rising costs, the decreasing number of theatres showing shorts (cartoons, in other words), and the competition of television all seemed to point toward the imminent extinction of the animated short. Only Disney was still active in the field, and then only in the feature area.

A small band of ex-MGM animators had started up an animation studio, producing a series of cartoons for TV called "Ruff 'n Reddy." Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera, creators of the classic team of Tom and Jerry, headed a staff that included Warren Foster and Michael Maltese, two writers from Warner Brothers cartoons, and voice man Daws Butler whose many credits included work with MGM, and Stan Freberg.

The talent and enthusiasm in the studio kept most spirits high, and all were sure their big break was coming; television as a whole was pulling out of its brief dry spell after the earlier "Golden Age." One final missing ingredient was added in 1957: corn flakes.

© Hanna-Barbera Productions

Kellogg's, interested for marketing reasons in sponsoring a children's show, was looking for a suitable animated series. Hanna-Barbera was contacted, and a show began to take shape. Instead of simply coming up with some character to MC the show (a la Howdy Doody), Hanna and Barbera envisaged three separate segments, making it easier to script and leaving some flexibility if either sponsor or audience disliked a particular segment.

"Because of time and budget," explains Art Scott, current production supervisor, "we couldn't use a lot of animation. So we borrowed from radio the concept of using a lot of jokes and satire. The characters created were more like stand-up comics than slapstick clowns."

The lead character filled that description perfectly. He didn't move fast; in fact, he didn't even talk fast.

"I had been doing the slow-talking, laconic voice for some time at MGM," explains Daws Butler. "At one time we were going to do a series with a wolf using the voice." The wolf in question appeared in a Droopy cartoon. "I even used the voice for the big dog, Ruff, in the series Hanna-Barbera was already doing."

Along with the voice, a slow-moving blue hound dog with a necktie was created. He was christened Huckleberry Hound and made master of ceremonies for his other stars: Yogi Bear, Mr. Jinx, and Pixie and Dixie. Oddly enough, the only thing Kellogg's didn't like was his name. They thought it was too long for children. But it stuck.

The show opened in syndication during September of 1958 in near-prime time (6:30 in New York). It became a surprise hit.

"We're always surprised when something catches on," states idea man William Hanna. "You work on something and you think it's good, but you're just as surprised when it's a hit as when it isn't."

Huckleberry Hound became an instant cult hero of sorts. Clubs fomed and merchandise flourished. But the biggest surprise was the discovery that a large percentage of the more than 16 million viewers were college students and adults. Hanna felt the puns and witty dialog gave Huck a "sophisticated feel." But perhaps the main factor was that Huck was something different in a TV season that opened with over 20 westerns and a dozen detective shows.

More than likely, it was Huck's character that caught audiences by surprise. Used to the brash, fast-paced cartoon characters of the past, Huck debuted as a nice friendly sort who was pleasant to be around and easy to get along with. His even temperament and amiable disposition was obviously due to the kind of superhuman patience that could remain blissfully oblivious to the most alarming injuries and disasters.

Parents Magazine called Huck a "homespun character who only sees the good in life, never the bad. He is blown up in rockets; trees fall on him; drawbridges collapse under him. Whatever happens, he picks himself up and drawls, 'Man, that was a right heavy tree,' or some other masterpiece of understatement, and perseveres with what he is doing."

Daws agrees that Huck is never vindictive, but always "vulnerable and philosophical." In an ever-accelerating world, Huck applies the brakes, trying not to get carried away by everyday nuisances.

"I think of Huck as human," said Warren Foster, author of most of the early scripts. "He's the fall guy, and a large part of his humor is the way he shrugs off misfortune. To Huck, nobody is really bad."

Of course, Huck's costars were also popular. In the classic irony of show biz, Yogi Bear eventually outclassed his host, gaining his own spinoff show and a feature film. Huck kept plugging away, turning up as anything from a scientist hunting a dangerous giant potato (spoof of 50's science fiction films) to his most famous role, the Purple Pumpernickel.

Huck's success engendered a new flourishing in the animation field. Just as Disney made the cinema world safe for cartoons, so TV was now opened to animators. Hanna-Barbera added Quick Draw McGraw to the roster; other companies contributed Bugs

Bunny, Beany and Cecil, Alvin and the Chipmunks, and Mr. Magoo to evening TV fare. These were all multisegmented shows, along lines pioneered by H-B

Then came 1960, and Hanna-Barbera left syndicated TV for network TV with something called "The Flintstones."

Once again, a hit. *Life Magazine:* "The Flintstones gives a much needed boost to a generally dismal TV season." The publication also explained that it was the huge adult following of Huckleberry Hound that had suggested this adult oriented, or at least adult-palatable, animated show.

Time found the new season "machine-tooled mediocrity" with one exception. "The Flintstones uses first-rate animated cartoons in place of second-rate actors, and its approach to satire of 20th Century life is by way of the Stone Age." (Also by way of Jackie Gleason and "The Honeymooners.")

The review went on to say, "the series has the sort of talent behind it that seldom fails." But that was all too easy a statement to make.

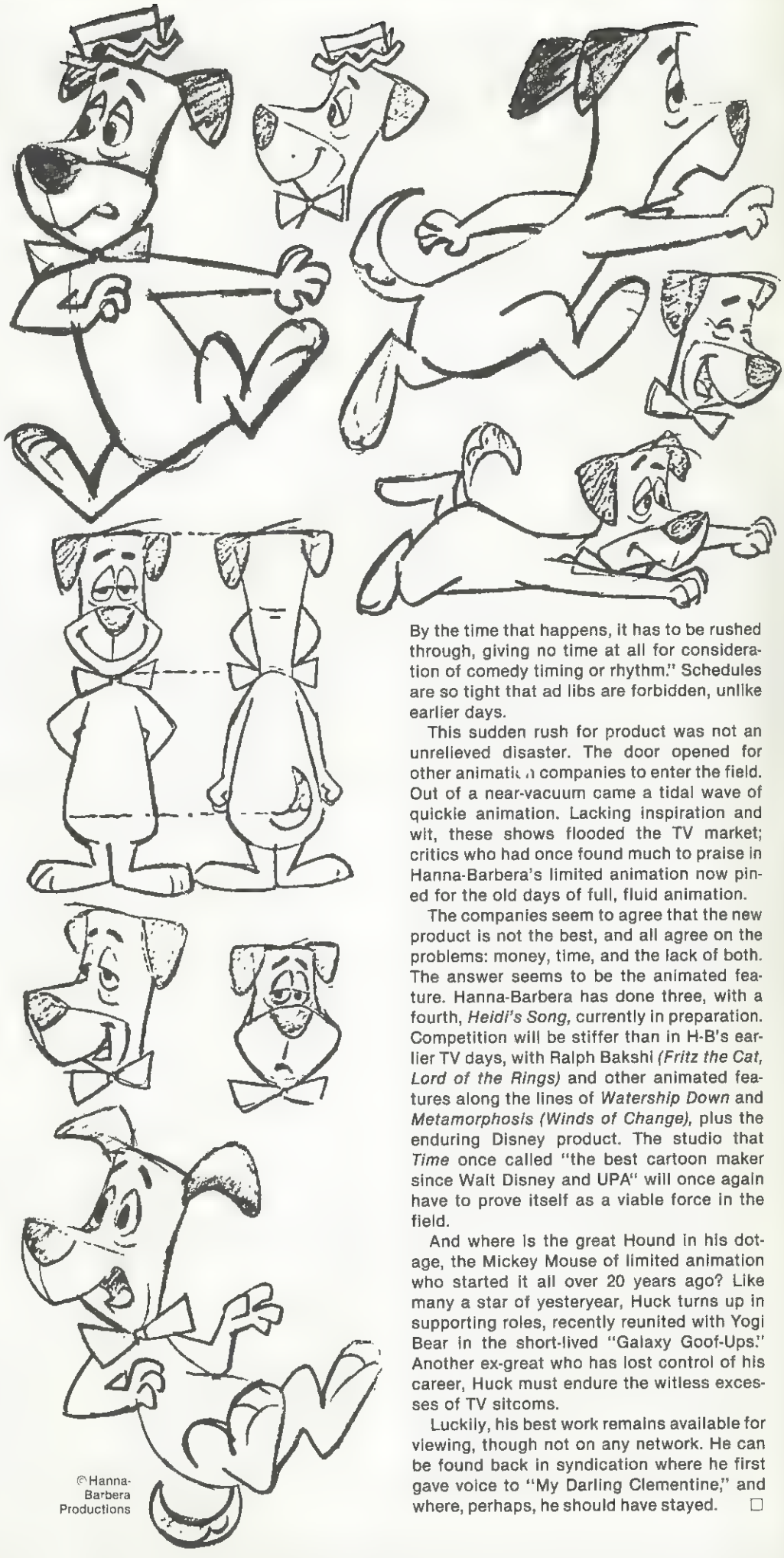
With Huckleberry Hound winning an Emmy for best children's programming, and the resounding hit of The Flintstones, networks were now coming to H-B looking for programming. This, plus the planned release of their first feature *Hey There, It's Yogi Bear,* was an indication that the studio was on its way. But this newfound success led to the problem of over-expansion. The studio soon had more commitments than it could handle, and the new pressures began to show. The early virtues of clever characters and snappy patter began to slump into the tedium of endless repetition and derivation.

The Flintstones had what it took; later cartoon sitcoms like Top Cat (i.e. Sergeant Bilko) and The Jetsons (a space age takeoff on the Flintstones) never made it past the first season, though they seem doomed to immortality in the afterlife of children's rerun TV. In contrast to dealing with a sponsor, the networks have hard and fast deadlines. Each year brought a shorter and shorter preparation period as the networks held back announcements of their new schedules.

"In the early days we created our products and sold them," recalls Art Scott. "Now we're just a service. The network calls and tells us what is wanted. We give it to them at the lowest cost possible. Otherwise they'll call someone else next time."

A foray into a new field of non-comedic adventure cartoons, "Johnny Quest," backfired when it sparked off a loud anti-violence campaign by local groups. The added pressure put new reins on the creative process. In 1962, the redoubtable *Parents Magazine* gave Huckleberry Hound an "acceptable" rating, commenting, "Although there is considerable action in the Hanna-Barbera scripts, they are not frightening. They never use a vicious character, not even for purposes of villainy. They never use violence for the sake of violence." Even these innocuous cartoons would not get past today's more stringent codes.

Daws Butler, still the voice of Huck, blames the networks for the lessening quality of shows. "Everything has to be approved.



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By the time that happens, it has to be rushed through, giving no time at all for consideration of comedy timing or rhythm." Schedules are so tight that ad libs are forbidden, unlike earlier days.

This sudden rush for product was not an unrelieved disaster. The door opened for other animation companies to enter the field. Out of a near-vacuum came a tidal wave of quickie animation. Lacking inspiration and wit, these shows flooded the TV market; critics who had once found much to praise in Hanna-Barbera's limited animation now pined for the old days of full, fluid animation.

The companies seem to agree that the new product is not the best, and all agree on the problems: money, time, and the lack of both. The answer seems to be the animated feature. Hanna-Barbera has done three, with a fourth, *Heidi's Song,* currently in preparation. Competition will be stiffer than in H-B's earlier TV days, with Ralph Bakshi *(Fritz the Cat, Lord of the Rings)* and other animated features along the lines of *Watership Down* and *Metamorphosis (Winds of Change),* plus the enduring Disney product. The studio that *Time* once called "the best cartoon maker since Walt Disney and UPA" will once again have to prove itself as a viable force in the field.

And where is the great Hound in his dotage, the Mickey Mouse of limited animation who started it all over 20 years ago? Like many a star of yesteryear, Huck turns up in supporting roles, recently reunited with Yogi Bear in the short-lived "Galaxy Goof-Ups." Another ex-great who has lost control of his career, Huck must endure the witless excesses of TV sitcoms.

Luckily, his best work remains available for viewing, though not on any network. He can be found back in syndication where he first gave voice to "My Darling Clementine," and where, perhaps, he should have stayed. □

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STEREO 3-D AND THE POPULAR ARTS

By RAY ZONE

Stereoscopy is the art and science of three-dimensional vision. 3-D imaging techniques are created by science and given expression through art. Artists have for centuries attempted to give their images the effects of volume and depth. The scientific use of perspective in art roughly parallels the rise of the printing press and the scientific revolution which has transformed the world.

Through their use in the mass media of commercial photography, newsprint and film, 3-D images have become a significant part of American, and international, popular culture. Today there is a wide range of 3-D imaging techniques that have applications in industry and science as well as entertainment and the fine arts.

Stereopsis, the perception of depth, is a result of the fact that our vision is binocular. Since our eyes are separated by a distance of about two and a half inches, we perceive any object from two separate viewpoints at the same time. 3-D imaging techniques involve the mechanical reconstruction of binary stereopsis. Leonardo Da Vinci, one of the great scientific artists, as early as 1584 studied the perception of depth and made diagrams analyzing binocular vision.

Stereoscopic photography is the invention of Sir Charles Wheatstone who created the stereoscope, or stereopticon, in 1838. The stereoscope is a hand-held viewer with two lenses into which is inserted a 3 x 7 inch stereographic card containing two images side-by-side. When the card is seen through the viewer the two images combine into a single image with depth. The stereoscope became a very popular device. The stereo cards photographically documented life of the time and important events from 1850 to about 1950. They were an early mass medium that filled the role that television, radio, film and magazines play today in recording disasters, scenic views and landmarks in history. Many people also gained their first views of exotic places around the world with the stereoscope.

Using a dioptic camera with two lenses that captured left and right eye viewpoints on a single strip of celluloid, William Friese-Green created the first three-dimensional motion pictures in 1889. The two images were

VISIONS

viewed through a somewhat heavier viewer that used an internal mirror system. Friese-Green's system was a cinematic application of the stereoscope, but it was not a commercial success.

The "Viewmaster" viewers that are still popular today make use of a system similar to Friese-Green's. Many popular characters such as King Kong and Dracula are seen by youngsters of the present day through these viewers. An array of foreign landscapes seen through the Viewmaster are similar to the exotic scenes of the old stereo cards.

The red-green *anaglyphic* 3-D process, originated in 1858, eventually found a widespread application in graphics and film. The anaglyph is based on patents of Ducos du Hauron; it requires that the left image be dyed red and the right image green (or vice versa). When these two colored films are simultaneously projected, superimposed on the screen, the audience member must view the film through glasses with one red and one green lens. The left and right eye viewpoints are then seen separately, giving a single black and white image with depth.

The earliest public use of the anaglyph was at the Astor theater in New York in 1915. Film pioneer Edwin S. Porter and William E. Waddell presented a program composed of random scenes around New York.

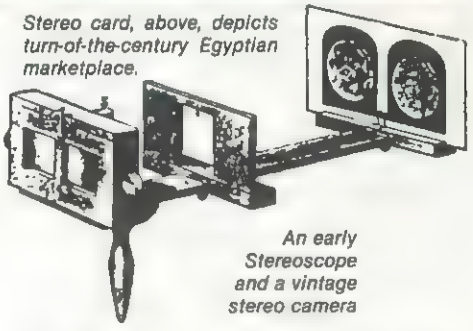
A unique adaptation of the anaglyph called the *Shadowgraph* was created by the Keith-Abbey vaudeville circuit in 1918. A translucent screen was lowered in front of a line of dancing girls. Red and green illumination behind the dancers created anaglyphic shadows on the screen which the audience viewed through red and green glasses.

The first use of the anaglyph for a feature film was in 1922 at the Ambassador Hotel Theater in Hollywood with *The Power of Love*, using a two-projector system. Early anaglyphic films were designated as *plasticons* and *plastigrams*. Plastigrams used only one strip of film that was coated with emulsion on both sides. The red image was applied to the front, green image to the back.

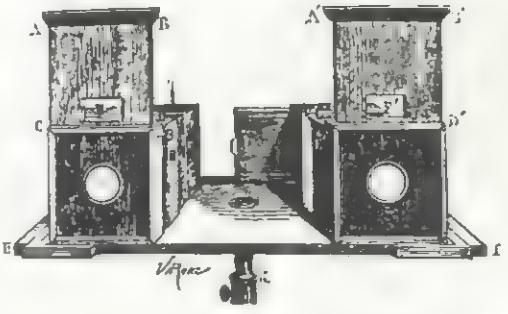
A novel plasticon opened at the Rivoli Theater in New York in 1922 which gave the viewer optional endings. To view the happy ending, one watched through the red filter. The green filter revealed the tragic ending. Other plasticons also played the Rivoli Theater in the same year, including a travelogue of Washington, D.C. and a short called *Movies of the Future* by William Van Doren Kelley.

3-D films enjoyed something of a boom in the twenties. Technicolor introduced a red and green bi-color film process in 1921 that led to several experiments, improving the anaglyph. Billy Bitzer, D.W. Griffith's ace cameraman, was instrumental in the development of the double-coated plastigram film process. Bitzer also created the cinematography for a series of plastigrams that played at New York's Cameo Theater for three years.

Stereo card, above, depicts turn-of-the-century Egyptian marketplace.



An early Stereoscope and a vintage stereo camera



In 1923 Frederick Eugene Ives and Jacob Leventhal produced a series of five short anaglyphic films, the first of which, released by Education, was appropriately titled *Plastigrams*. The remaining four were released by Pathe in 1925 as their "Stereoscopiks" series: *A Runaway Taxi, Ouch Zowie* and *Lunacy*.

For his 1925 cinematic tour de force *Napoleon*, French film pioneer Abel Gance used not only a three-camera technique that anticipated *Cinerama*, but also shot a battle scene in anaglyphic 3-D. Unfortunately the anaglyphic segment was not used in the final version of the film.

Another entirely different 3-D process known generically as the "Eclipse system" debuted in 1922 under the name *Teleview* at the Selwyn Theater in New York. Developed by Laurens Hammond and Wiliam F. Cassidy, Teleview required that the audience member watch the film through a viewer bolted to the armrest of the seat. The viewer contained a small motor with a revolving shutter that separated left and right eye images. A single alternator supplied the power to two projectors and all the viewers, keeping the entire system synchronized. The initial films using the Teleview system included travelogues of the southwest, still lifes and a popular scene in which a dragon rises from the orchestra pit and scurries out at the audience. A feature length science fiction film created for Teleview entitled *M.A.R.S.* or *The Man From Mars* was released by Biograph Studios in 1922. Martians with large heads and long talons were featured.

By the twenties another 3-D imaging technique had gained popular application—the *lenticular* process, also known as the *parallax panoramagram* and the *integram*. With this technique the right and left views are broken up into thin, vertical strips and then integrated to form a single image. The lenticular 3-D process has been used continuously on post cards, magazine covers and toys. Kellogg's of Battle Creek currently offers as premiums 3-D baseball cards that also make use of the lenticular process.

The Russians have developed over the years a number of lenticular film systems. For screens they have used high tension wires and engraved glass with cylindrical corrugations. The first theatre designed expressly for 3-D opened in Moscow in 1941.

World War II delayed completion of Russia's first lenticular feature, a film called *Machine 12-22,* until 1945.

The first 3-D film with sound was Pete Smith's *Audioscopiks,* released in 1936 by MGM. *Audioscopiks* used an anaglyphic system devised by John Norling and Jacob Leventhal adapting the two-color Technicolor process. *The New Audioscopiks* was released in 1938. Smith's 1941 *Third Dimension Murder,* a spoof on the Frankenstein films, was the last in the series.

In 1910 a movie critic for the *New York Independent* newspaper wrote, "We expect to see sometime a stereoscopic colored speaking moving picture drama and it will be well worth seeing. It will be a new form of fine art not unworthy to rank with the elder arts." The critic did not have to wait too long for the monochromatic anaglyph, but color 3-D films took a little longer to develop.

In 1932 Dr. Edwin H. Land patented a process for producing polaroid filters that led to the development of color 3-D films. Polaroid 3-D separated images with polaroid filters instead of red and green filters. The first feature film using polaroid 3-D was a 1936 Italian production in black and white called *Nozze Vagabonde* (Beggar's Wedding.) The first color 3-D film in the polaroid process was Germany's 1937 *You Can Nearly Touch It.* For the 1939 World's Fair in New York, the Chrysler corporation produced a black and white polaroid 3-D film combinng live action and animation in demonstrating a new Chrysler engine. This film, created by John Norling, was seen by over 1,500,000 people. Norling remade a Technicolor version of the film for the 1940 World's Fair, and produced a color 3-D film called *Thrills For You* for the Pennsylvania Railroad Display at the 1940 Golden Gate Exposition in San Francisco.

Because of World War II there was little development of 3-D for popular media in the forties. As the fifties began, audiences were busy discovering the novelty of television. Movie producers used 3-D as a way of attracting audiences back into the theaters and, for a brief time, it was enormously popular. A 1952 African adventure film entitled *Bwana Devil,* directed by Arch Oboler, initiated the 3-D boom in the fifties. *Bwana Devil* was shot in color using the *Natural Vision* process with polaroid separation. There were several visually dramatic scenes in *Bwana Devil* highlighting the 3-D effect. One scene, in particular, used spears protruding out at the audience. When *Bwana Devil* proved to be a success, all of the major studios jumped on the 3-D bandwagon.

The 3-D boom of the fifties lasted, all in all, less than two years, from late 1952 to early 1954. In that time roughly 85 films were released in 3-D. The vast majority of these, both black and white and color, used polaroid separation.

Warner Brothers' 1953 *House of Wax* was the most profitable 3-D film—shot in color with the Natural Vision process, directed by Andre de Toth with Vincent Price in the starring role. Price later starred in a black and white 3-D opus from Columbia called *The Mad Magician.*

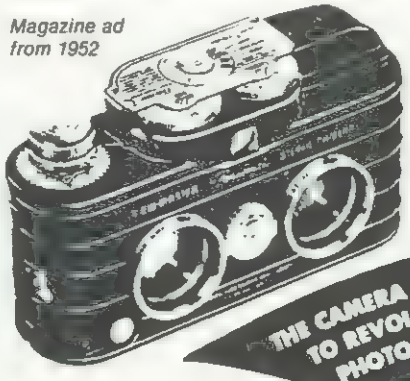
With its wide open spaces and action-filled scenes, the western was a natural in 3-D. *Fort Ti,* a Columbia production in Natural Vision and color, was the first western released in 3-D. Warner Brothers' *Charge at Feather River* is noted for its visual assault upon the audience. Debris, rocks and arrows hurtled out from the screen. In one scene actor Frank Lovejoy even spits out at the audience. Warner Brothers used their own camera system to shoot a John Wayne vehicle entitled *Hondo.* Gimmicky director William Castle was responsible for Columbia's 1954 *Jesse James versus the Daltons.*

MGM studios had created a dual camera system of their own called *Metrovision,* producing the rodeo drama *Arena* in color. MGM also used their system for *Kiss Me Kate,* a musical starring Kathryn Grayson and Howard Keel, one of the best of the 3-D films.

Of all story genres it is the science fiction film which provides the greatest possibility for visual experimentation. Using a polaroid process, Astor Films produced two of the worst in the genre entitled *Robot Monster* and *Cat Women of the Moon.* Sonny Tufts and Victor Jory were featured in the latter. *GOG,* a 1954 release in color from United Artists, starred Richard Egan and Herbert Marshall.

It was Universal that produced the classic 3-D film in the genre. *It Came From Outer Space,* directed by Jack Arnold from a story by Ray Bradbury, includes many stunning visual effects. The film opens with a meteor bursting out at the audience as aliens from outer space make a crash landing in the Southern California desert. Several people in a small town begin acting strangely as the aliens inhabit their bodies. Richard Carlson was the male lead, and he appeared in several other 3-D films, notably *The Creature from the Black Lagoon,* Universal's next 3-D release, and a horror fantasy from Allied Artists called *The Maze.* "Centuries of passion pent up in his savage heart," (as the ads proclaimed) *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*

Magazine ad from 1952



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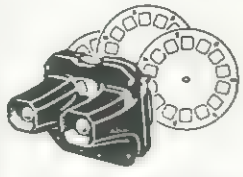


MILLIONS KNOW VIEW-MASTER. Millions of families have seen and enjoyed 3 dimension pictures in full color on familiar View-Master Reels.

THE MOST ASTOUNDING MOTION PICTURE SINCE MOTION PICTURES BEGAN! WARNER BROS.' AMAZING FEATURE PICTURE IN NATURAL VISION
3 DIMENSION
a panic swept
city for the beauties
he craved for his
chamber of horrors!
IT COMES OFF THE SCREEN RIGHT AT YOU!
"HOUSE OF WAX"
WARNERCOLOR
VINCENT PRICE · FRANK LOVEJOY · PHYLLIS KIRK

featured dynamic visual effects with outstanding underwater photography. It was soon followed by the 1955 sequel *Revenge of the Creature* in "All new 3-D Horror-Scope!"

A number of animated cartoons and short features were also produced in 3-D. Walt Disney's only 3-D cartoon was *Melody*. Woody Woodpecker appeared in Universal's *Hypnotic Hick* and Bugs Bunny was featured in Warner Brothers' *Lumber Jack Rabbit*. Paramount released two stereo cartoons, *Boo Moon* with Casper the ghost, and *Popeye, Ace of Space*. In Canada, experimental filmmaker Norman McLaren produced two 3-D cartoons using a camera designed and constructed by Leslie P. Dudley. The Three Stooges appeared in the short anaglyphic films *Spooks, Tails of Horror* and *Pardon My Backfire*.

The 3-D fad died almost as quickly as it began. Several films were shot in 3-D but never saw release in that format because it was apparent to movie producers that the craze was fading. Alfred Hitchcock's 1954 *Dial M-For Murder* was one such film. Columbia's 1953 *Miss Sadie Thompson* and RKO's *Son of Sinbad* from 1954 also suffered a similar fate. All of the 3-D films were later released in "flat" versions, and many can be seen on television in that format today.

The eventual public apathy to 3-D films in the fifties may have been partly a result of uneven projection technique. Eye fatigue occurred when the two projectors got out of sync, however slightly. Audiences might have found the cardboard glasses inconvenient but, as a novelty, the majority of people most likely only attended one or two 3-D films out of curiosity.

But the 3-D craze in films had produced an effect in other media. It stimulated public interest in stereophotography and made quite a splash in the world of popular photography. Many new 3-D cameras appeared on the market. There was, for instance, "The View-Master Stereo Camera" that could be operated "by even the most inexperienced amateur with ease and confidence." Articles in *Popular Mechanics, Photoraphy*, and *Life* discussed the different 3-D processes. Many stereo photography clubs were formed at this time, world-wide, that are still going strong today.

In 1953 the anaglyph had begun appearing in newspapers, magazines and comic books. Bullocks department stores of Los Angeles took out six full-page ads with red and green graphics in the *Los Angeles Times*. *3-D movie Magazine* appeared on newsstands. It included anaglyphic photos of movie stars such as Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, Kathryn Grayson and others. Of course, "Dimensional Viewers" were bound into the magazine.

3-D comic books were one of the most interesting applications of the anaglyph to graphic reproduction. There were over forty 3-D comic books produced from 1952 to 1954 in all story genres. Priced at twenty-five cents, they included red-green glasses. St. John Publications' *Three Dimension Comics,*starring Mighty Mouse, was one of the first and most successful. Art by Joe Kubert and Norman Maurer in "Illustereo" depicted spectacular scenes in outer space of Mighty Mouse battling asteroids and alien cats. In other St. John comics like *House of Terror, The Hawk* and *3-D Comics,* Kubert and Maurer created imaginative new uses for the anaglyph that included optional imagery. National Periodical's *3-D Superman*, in large format, featured Superman's origin story. The destruction of Krypton is dynamic in 3-D. National also produced two issues of *3-D Batman*.

All the major publishers, including Dell, Fiction House, EC, Atlas (pre-Marvel) and Harvey, produced 3-D comics. The ECs were excellent dimensional conversions of earlier stories with art by Wally Wood, Jack Davis, Graham Ingels and Bernard Krigstein. Kelloggs offered small 3-D comic giveaways with their cereals featuring Disney characters such as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck.

One of the most original creatures for 3-D comic books was Harvey Publications' *Captain 3-D* with vivid Jack Kirby art. Captain 3-D is released from "The Book of D" when young Danny Davis examines it through special glasses. Besides those artists already mentioned, art for 3-D comics was created by George *(Sad Sack)* Baker, Jay Disbrow, Bob Powell, Howard Nostrand and Russ Heath.

The 3-D trend in comic books died as abruptly as it did for the movies. The fifties represent the second great flowering of 3-D in the popular arts. But since that time there have been intermittent attempts to revive use of 3-D processes in different media.

William Castle released a 1960 film called *13 Ghosts* which, while not an actual 3-D film, made use of a "ghost viewer" with red and blue filters. the process was dubbed "Illusion-O". The ghosts were visible through the

red filter, slightly visible to the naked eye and invisible through the blue filter.

In 1961 Toronto-based Taylor-Roffman productions produced *The Mask*, a black and white horror film that features three five-minute anaglyphic segments that are quite effective. "Look through your mask. If you can't take it—take it off!" The audience was informed during the film when to don the red-green mask and "share what no living person has known before."

Using the *4-D Space Vision* process developed by Robert Bernier, entrepreneur Arch Oboler shot a science fiction film initially entitled *The Bubble*, released in 1966. *The Bubble* has been released more recently under the title *Fantastic Invasion of Planet Earth* and features some outstanding 3-D effects. Bernier's Space Vision has the capability to clearly project images out from the "window" of the movie screen without eyestrain. Oboler also used the Space Vision system for a 1972 travelogue of Japan, *Domo Arigato*. Murray Lerner for Marineland of Florida produced a short film called *Sea Dream*, a dramatic display of Bernier's Space Vision used with underwater photography. Andy Warhol's 1974 *Frankenstein* was shot in Space Vision with several scenes making excellent use of the process including an animated sequence with bats.

In 1973 Universal Pictures re-released *It Came From Outer Space* and *The Creature From the Black Lagoon* in new anaglyphic prints using only a single strip of film. They have been regularly playing encore and art theaters since that time.

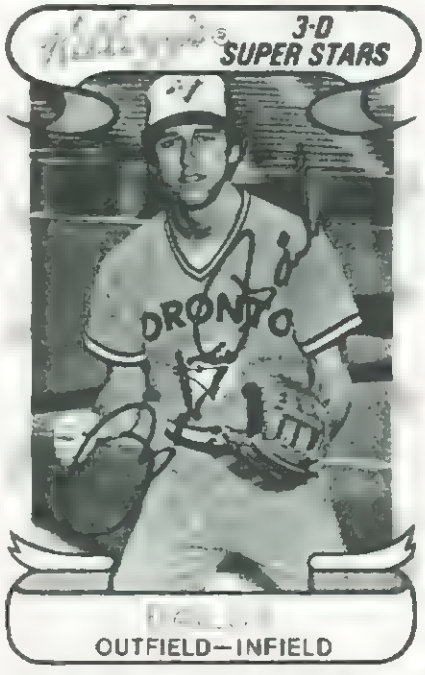
There have also been periodic revivals of the anaglyph in magazines in recent years. *3-D Monsters*, a Fairchild publication from 1964, features six anaglyphic scenes of horror presented in miniature tableau. *The National Lampoon* in 1975 issued a 3-D special with many anaglyphic comics and ads. An underground comic book *3-D Deep* from Krupp Comic Works, appeared in 1972.

Several optical pioneers in recent years have developed new 3-D imaging techniques with a variety of applications. Leslie P. Dudley is a British optical wizard who has worked with three-dimensional processes for fifty years. In 1951 he published one of the standard texts in the field, *Stereoptics* (MacDonald & Company, London). Dudley has created several different 3-D processes. In the early fifties he developed a polychromatic, or full color, anaglyph.

A process of Dudley's development called *Stereochrome* makes 3-D television possible. The biggest stumbling block to 3-D TV thus far has been the stringent FCC requirement that such systems be compatible with present systems: the broadcast image must be clearly viewable with or without glasses as both a 2-D and 3-D image. Dudley's Stereochrome yields a compatible image one can enjoy without glasses. But seen with the viewers, the images are given depth.

In October of 1976 the Tokyo Movie Company debuted a series of animated 3-D cartoons for Japanese television using Dudley's Stereochrome process. The series, *Sans Famille*, is an adaptation of a French fairy tale. These three-dimensional cartoons have also been seen on television in France, Italy and Holland.

A 1906 Photochange Post Card, printed in the lenticular 3-D process, and a current Kellogg's baseball card premium that makes use of the same process.



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James Butterfield is another innovator working with 3-D television and he holds a number of patents. In 1954 and 1955 Butterfield transmitted 3-D TV in Mexico on a daily basis. His 3-D Technology Corporation, based in Hollywood, has produced some dynamic new applications of 3-D. A 3-D closed-circuit television system of Butterfield's invention is now being used by hospitals for remote medical observation and manipulation of dangerous radioactive materials. NASA has installed Butterfield's stereo camera on satellites to take 3-D pictures of the Earth from space. His *Stereotronics Video* microscope is used in microsurgery, biological research and micro-electronic manufacturing.

In 1980 a new system of motion picture projection called *Vera Pictura* debuted on the east coast. The system was invented by audio-visual specialist James Carnes and consists of a relatively inexpensive projector lens that can be installed in standard theatrical projectors in less than a minute. When projected through the lens, any 2-D film is broken up into a double image. Seen through Carnes' special polarizing glasses, the images are united to create the illusion of depth. Carnes' lens manipulates several of the psychological cues of depth. The illusion is not as sensational as older systems but the process does give the effect of a "window on reality." The exciting thing about Vera Pictura is that any film ever made can be seen in 3-D. Carnes is now beginning to market his system. The first film to be projected publicly with Vera Pictura was Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* at the Cinema Downtown in Buffalo, New York.

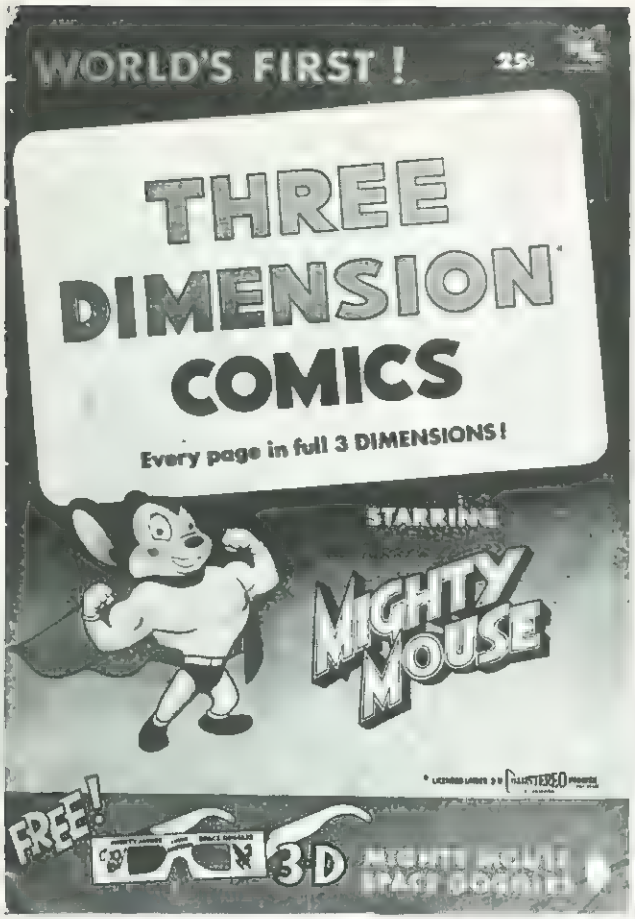
Newest of the 3-D imaging devices is the *hologram*. The art and science of holography is still in its infancy. A hologram, as defined in the *Random House College Dictionary*, is "a true three-dimensional photograph recorded on film by a reflected laser beam of a subject illuminated by a portion of the same laser beam." A laser light, itself a recent invention, is split by mirrors into the *object* beam and *reference* beam. The object beam illuminates the subject. Both beams, without a lens, are reflected onto a photographic plate of film. After the plate of film is developed, the original reference beam is reflected onto it and recreates a three-dimensional image. Holograms are now in use that can be illuminated by light bulbs and sunlight.

The popular application of holography is just beginning. There are several varieties of holograms. Already relatively inexpensive holograms are commercially available.

The *transmission holograms* reconstruct an image which is seen by looking through the hologram as window. 4½" x 4½" transmission holograms of still lifes are now available for under ten dollars. Natural color holograms have not been developed as yet, but there are several with a multi-hued rainbow effect.

Small *dichromatic* (two color) hologram discs are now available as jewelry. These discs, viewable in normal ambient light, are made by illuminating a dichromatic gelatin with laser light and then encasing it between two pieces of laminated glass.

The *multiplex* hologram has been developed by Lloyd Cross and Dave Schmidt



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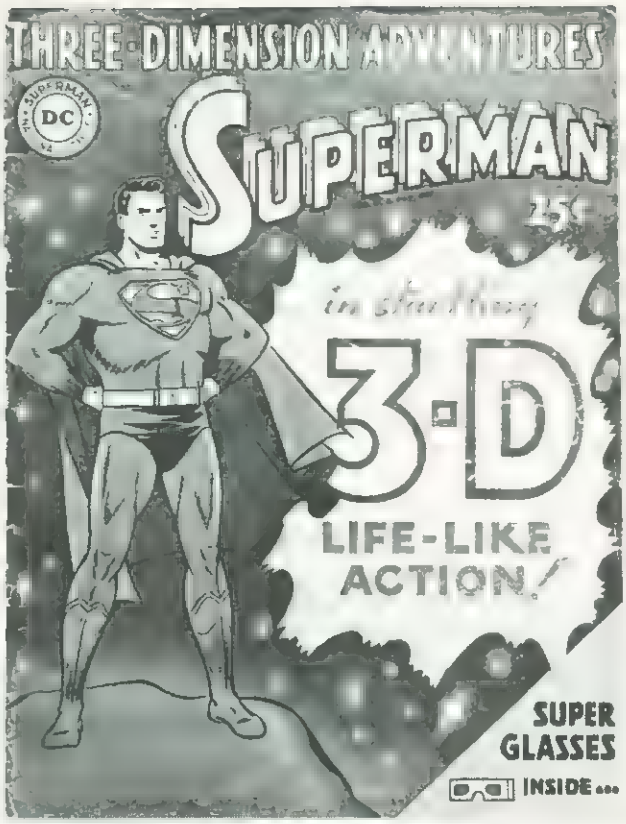

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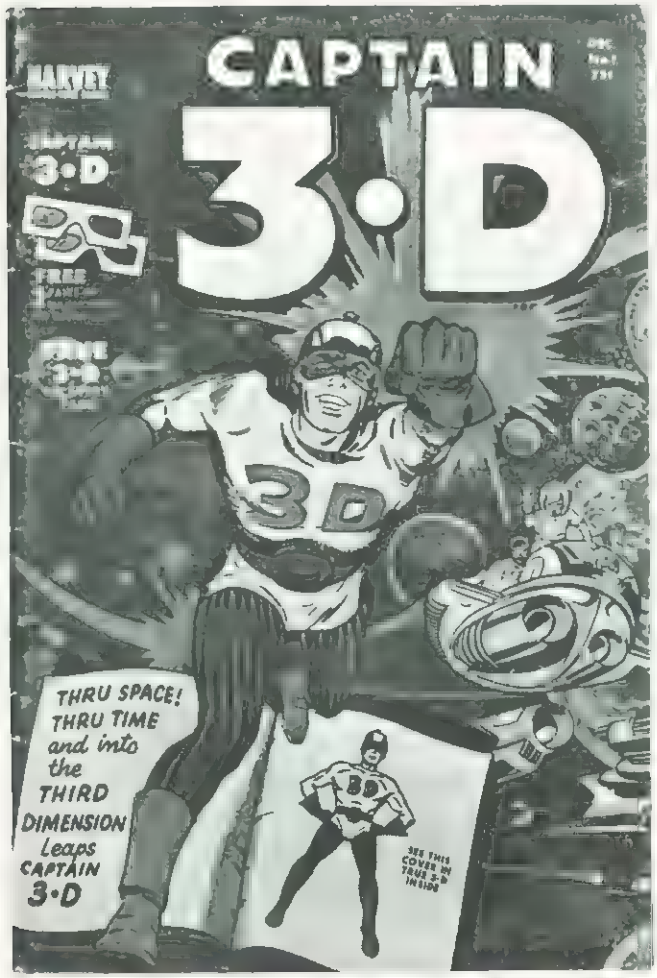

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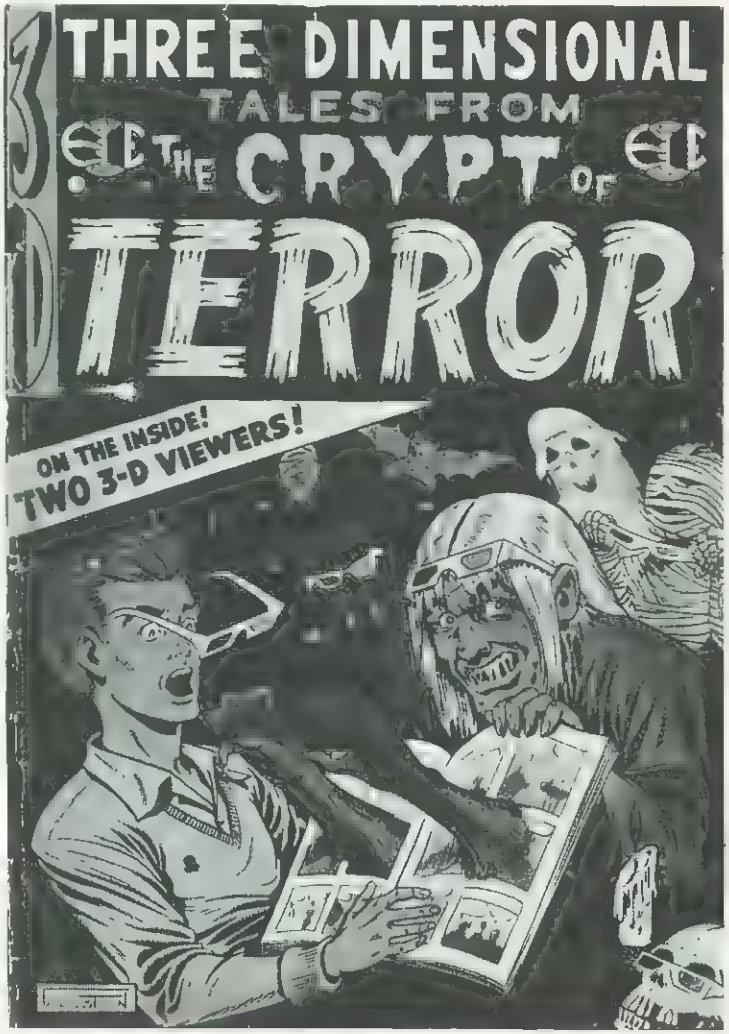


©1953 Tiny Tot Comics Inc.

of the Multiplex Company in San Francisco. This new technique combines 35mm photography and holography to produce a moving 3-D image that is reconstructed with a normal light bulb. A multiplex hologram is a cylindrical construction that appears to contain a 3-D image that moves as you look at it from different angles. Holograms of this type currently available depict a moving kiss, a Balinese dancer, King Kong and W.C. Fields.

A 3-D image seems to protrude through the front of the plate with the *projected image* hologram. Stephen Benton has executed a popular hologram of this kind using a toy locomotive. Projected image holograms are viewable in ordinary light.

In 1976 Rosemary Jackson opened in New York the *Museum of Holography* as a center for information on this newest 3-D imaging technique. The museum features exhibitions of new holograms as well as shows documenting the evolution of stereoscopy. A recent show entitled "Similar Visions" traced stereography from its beginnings with Wheatstone up to the present day. The anaglyph, polaroid 3-D and other processes were spotlighted with the work of early pioneers like Ives and Land. The museum includes a bookstore selling holograms.

Because of the physical limitations of the laser set-up, holographic films and television remain remote possibilities at present. Work is now underway, however, to create a full color hologram. Experiments in this direction are being executed using red, green and blue laser lights.

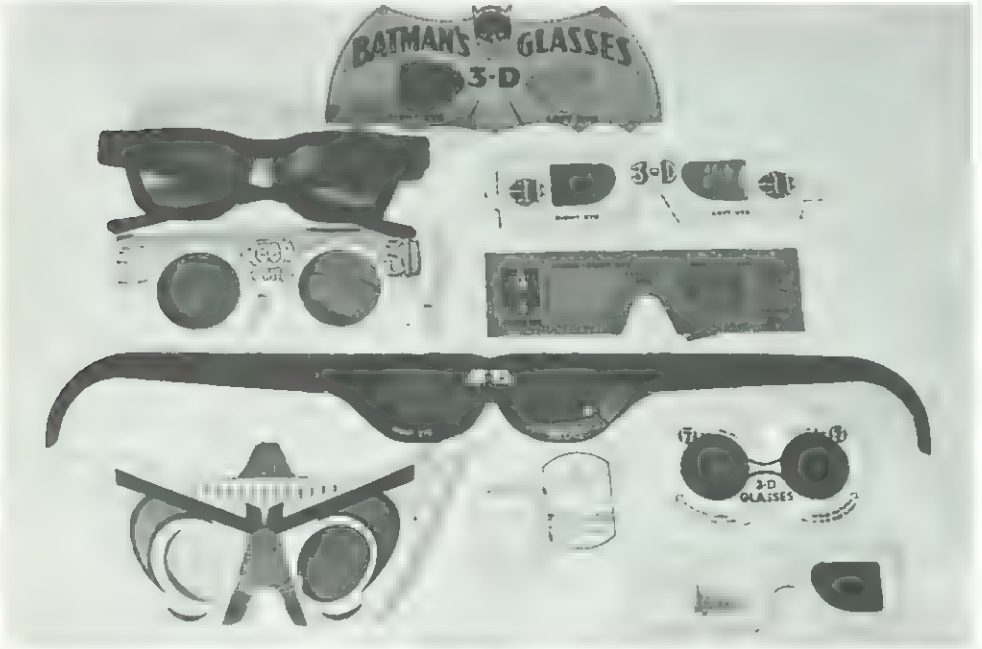
Holographic imagery has been depicted in several science fiction films from MGM's 1956 *Forbidden Planet* to *Logan's Run* and *Star Wars* more recently. In 1978 a new comic book character from Peter Pan Records appeared in *The Amazing Adventures of Holo-Man.* Holo-Man is "the World's first living hologram." Joe Giella art depicts Holo-Man projecting 3-D images into thin air and transporting himself by molecular teleportation.

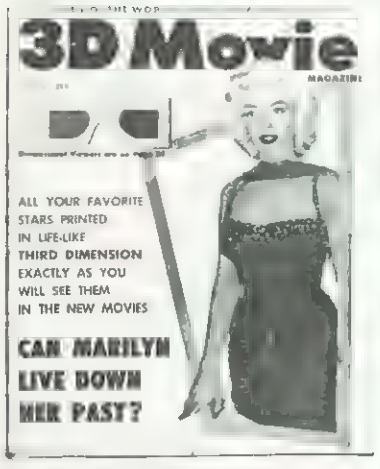
As stereoscopy progresses from a fascinating oddity to a legitimate artistic expression, its appearance in the fine arts is inevitable. Already inroads have been made. Conceptual artist Bruce Nauman included an eerie hologram self-portrait in a 1973 exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. More recently Surrealist artist Salvador Dali has created a series of massive stereoscopic works designed to be seen through special glasses.

If at last 3-D is now entering the world of fine art, it is only because the popular arts have nurtured it for many years. Movies, comic books and magazines have provided a testing-ground and forum for many unique experiments in visual perception.

Small groups of dedicated individuals like the Stereo Club of Southern California or the International Stereoscopic Union have also carried the dimensional torch. Tom Cooper at the Tiffany Theater in Hollywood presents regular revivals of 3-D films. He has even given movies like *Dial M For Murder* and *Miss Sadie Thompson* their world premier in the 3-D format.

If 3-D fads recur in thirty-year cycles (as from the twenties to the fifties) then early in the eighties we should see a renaissance of stereography. Science provides the means for artists to seek truer mirrors of the world or windows on alternate realities. □

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For readers interested in stereo photography, 3-D TV or holography, the following addresses might be of some use:

International Stereoscopic Union
Don Jeater
The Old Manor, Radipole
Weymouth, Dorset. Dt3 5HS England

Museum of Holography
120 West 20th St.
New York, N.Y. 10011

Stereo Club of Southern California
Los Angeles Photo Center
412 So. Parkview St.
Los Angeles, CA 90057

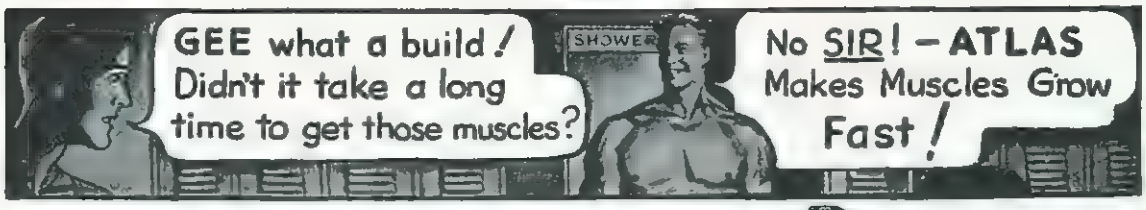
3-D Television Systems, Inc.
James F. Butterfield, Technical Director
4382 Lankershim Blvd.
N. Hollywood, CA 91692

Multiplex Company
454 Shotwell St.
San Francisco, CA 94110

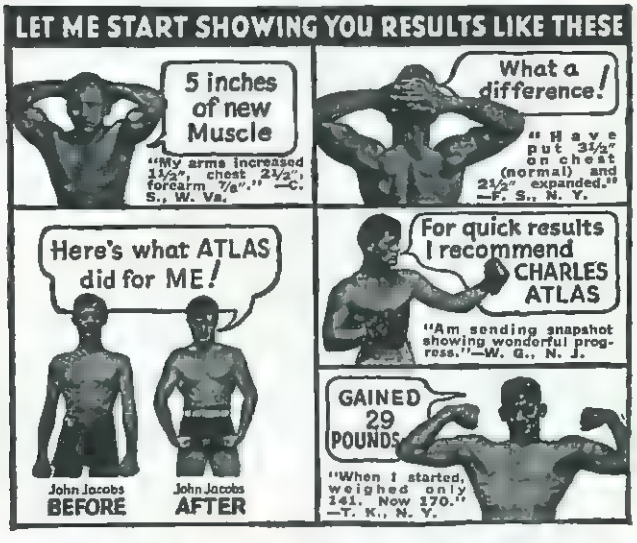
James Carnes (Vera Pictura System)
12104 Warner Hill Road
South Wales NY 14139 (716) 652-4968

3-D International Enterprises
122 S. Carondolet
Los Angeles CA 90057

PLANET
STORIES
STRANGE ADVENTURES ON OTHER
WORLDS—THE UNIVERSE
OF FUTURE CENTURIES
SPRING, 1944
LEIGH
BRACKETT
•
ROBERT
ABERNATHY
WANDERERS OF THE WOLF-MOON
AN AMAZING NOVEL OF THE SARGASSO SPACEWAYS
By NELSON S. BOND



Will You Let Me PROVE I Can Make YOU a *New Man?*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5 inches of new Muscle
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What a difference!
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☐ Check here if under 16 for Booklet A.

"I had a dream," Billings said. "I was in a dark room and there was something I couldn't. . . couldn't quite see, in the closet. It made a noise. . . a squishy noise. It reminded me of a comic book I read when I was a kid. *Tales From The Crypt*, you remember that? Christ! They had a guy named Graham Ingels; he could draw every god-awful thing in the world — and some out of it. Anyway, in this story this woman drowned her husband, see? Put cement blocks on his feet and dropped him into a quarry. Only he came back. He was all rotted and black-green and the fish had eaten away one of his eyes and there was seaweed in his hair. He came back and killed her. And when I woke up in the middle of the night, I thought that would be leaning over me. With claws. . . long claws. .

Excerpt from "The Boogeyman," a short story by Stephen King, first published in the March 1978 Cavalier and reprinted in the 1978 Night Shift anthology

---

Dear Bill, 1/12/78

I really appreciate your consideration. I'm not a total recluse but avoid public contact much as possible, particularly relating to the past.

My work these days requires a certain amount of publicity & promotion beneficial mainly to other interests. Obviously I have many good reasons to constantly discourage the image making attempts of well intentioned followers.

I am here during the winter months only, so their projected visit would be pointless. Even so, I would regard the intrusion with great hostility, and believe me it would avail them nothing. This guy Spicer comes on strong in a crude fashion & he does *not* have my address. My attorney handles all.

I will be most grateful if you block any further inquiry and appreciate so much your concern and the trouble you've taken.

Best wishes and happiness, thanks,

Graham

Regards to the old gang! I have many gratifying thoughts of our relationship, Bill, and your graciousness at Christmas time.

Letter written to Fantasy Publishing Co. Bill Contis, printed with permission

SPAWN of the TWIN PLANETS

Graham Ingels' work as both pulp illustrator and comic book artist was closely allied with the crossover between comics and pulp magazines at Fiction House. At this company, comic books were referred to as Fiction House "magazines," a term commonly used by publishers who felt a need to legitimize the format. Fiction House president Thurman Scott also attempted to appeal to different audiences by giving his pulp titles *(Jungle Stories, Fight Stories, Wings, Planet Stories)* similarly titled comic book companions *(Jungle Comics, Fight Comics, Wings Comics, Planet Comics),* illustrated by artists at the S.M. "Jerry" Iger shop. Other pulp publishers did the same. The Marvel Comics line of today began when the Funnies, Inc. shop, headed by Lloyd Jacquet, sold pulp publisher Martin Goodman on the idea of *Marvel Comics* (first published in November of 1939) as an extension of his *Marvel Stories* pulp.

Fiction House's science fiction pulp *Planet Stories* blasted off in

This page and opposite: PLANET STORIES, Fall 1945

THE PULP ART OF GRAHAM INGELS

the winter of 1939 and ran until June, 1955. Its comic book twin, *Planet Comics,* began with the January, 1940, issue and lasted until #73, 1954. (The majority of Fiction House's comic books were launched between 1940 and 1942, continuing until 1953-54.) *Planet Stories* was sometimes advertised in *Planet Comics,* obviously in hopes that the more ambitiously literate among

Illustrated by INGELS

the comic's readership would graduate to the pulp — or, better yet, buy both. Another pulps/comics link at Fiction House was the two *Planet* "Vizigraph" letter columns (usually consisting of corrections on science facts), a feature page that pre-dated the editor/reader communications of EC's letter columns by several years. During the Forties, *Planet Comics* was one of the few comic books to have a reader column (in scattered early issues and regularly in 1946 beginning with issue #44), along with the highly active letter columns which began in Novelty Publications *(4 Most, Target Comics, Blue Bolt)* in 1940.

Almost a decade before his "Ghastly" - signed EC art, Graham Ingels' work appeared in *Planet Comics* and at least five Fiction House pulps: *Planet Stories, Northwest Romances, Jungle Stories, Wings* and *Action Stories,* this

The first issue, January 1940

BY BHOB STEWART

last an all-purpose format of adventure, western and air-war. Research indicates that the sum total of Ingels' pulp art was published only by Fiction House between 1943 and 1945. These illustrations show the beginnings of the gnarled, atmospheric style he later developed to full effect during the Fifties in his Old Witch EC tales — a style making generous use of silhouettes and twisted shadow shapes, perfect for illustrating horror stories; it had its tangled roots in the drybrush strokes and rich blacks common among pulp artists of the Thirties.

Ingels joined EC in 1948, thirteen years after he had begun as a freelancer in commercial art, a field he had a natural inclination toward because it was also his father's profession. Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on June 7, 1915, Ingels, at an early age, moved with his family to Georgia (where he may have picked up his flair for depicting Southern Gothic horror, seen in many of his EC stories). When he was twelve, his family relocated in New York where he went to school first in Yonkers, then on Long Island. The death of his father sent fourteen-year-old Graham out looking for work; labor as a window-washer was only one of various jobs he held during this period. But, within two years, he was employed doing displays for theaters. In 1935, when comic books were being introduced and newsstands were packed to capacity with pulp magazines, Ingels married and set forth as a freelancer. When World War II came along, he joined the Navy in 1943; after just two days aboard the USS Missouri, he spent the rest of the war stationed on Long Island — which explains how he was able to sit at the drawing board for Fiction House while in the service.

Planet Comics featured continued characters, and the lead feature beginning with issue #21 was "The Lost World," set in the 33rd Century (after the planet wars) when Earth has only a small number of survivors — including Hunt Bowman, a hero armed, naturally, only with bow and arrows. Captured by Voltamen, Bowman is taken aboard their spaceship where he meets Lyssa, Queen of the Lost World. Escaping, they return to Earth to lead the others against the Voltamen in a seemingly unending war. By 1948, after helping Hunt knock off a thousand Voltamen in an ancient Aztec temple, the scantily-clad Lyssa was wearily asking, "And now, Hunt, what next? Do you think we will ever win this war?"

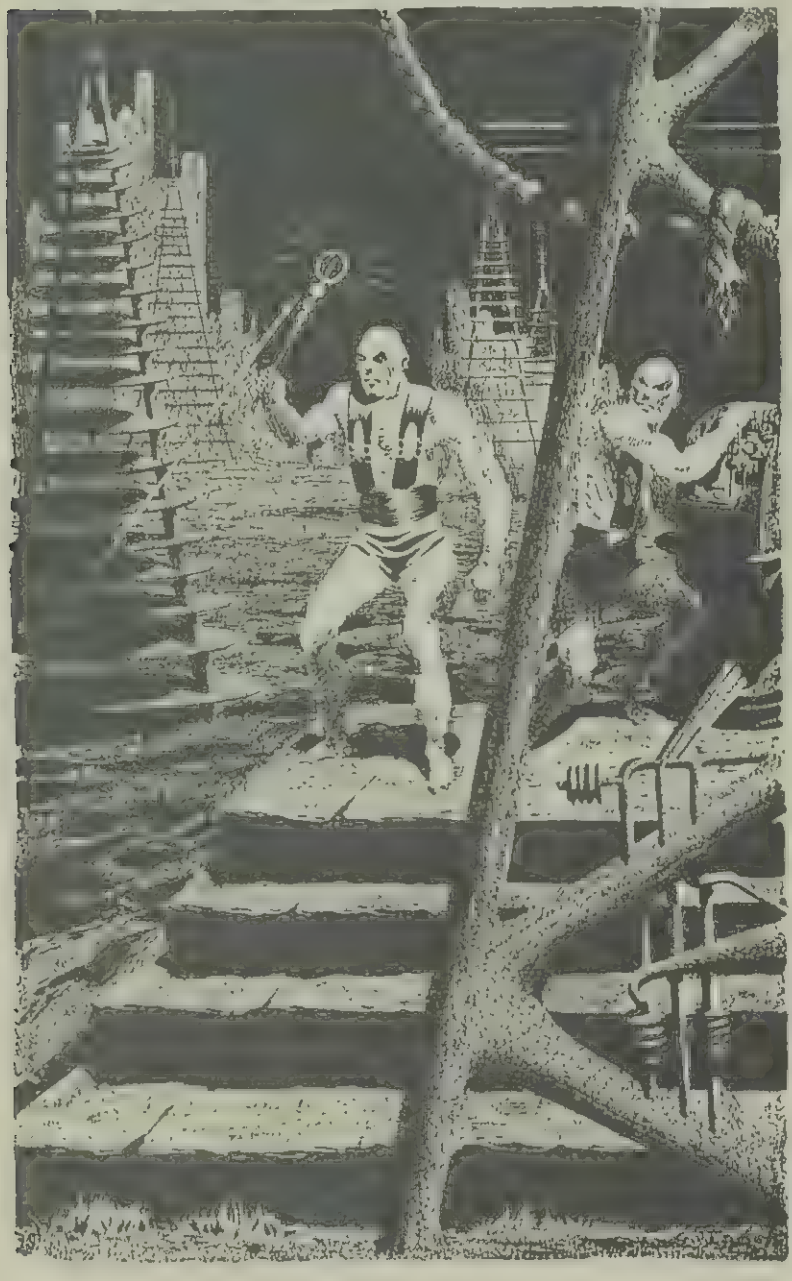
It may be that the editors of *Planet Comics* failed to realize that many of its young readers, World War II children with fathers in war-torn Europe, never found the action-adventure of "The Lost

THE JEWEL OF BAS

By LEIGH BRACKETT

Two-page spread from PLANET STORIES, Spring 1944

World" as entrancing as the imaginative doomscape of its background drawings: Hunt's battles often take place amid devastated landmarks of New York City or in wrecked subways, a setting equally fascinating in the 1970 film *Beneath the Planet of the Apes*. To American youths of the Forties, growing up not only on comics but also on *Life* magazine's photo journalism and movie newsreels of Allied troops marching through the rubble of bombed cities, "The Lost World" became more of a plausible reality than a fantasy. Another film, RKO's 1952 *Captive Women* (re-released in 1957 as *1000 Years From Now),* made when "The Lost World" had been around for a decade, was so similar to the *Planet Comics* serial in situations, costuming and the setting of NYC ruins that one wonders if the RKO film might not have been suggested by "The Lost World." Dick Ellington's "Me To Your Leader Take" in *All In Color For A Dime* (Arlington House, 1970) described the "Lost World" environs: "Chases through subway tunnels, battles in Central Park, lookouts in the Empire State Building — all this lent a definite extra something to the strip." Even today, many middle-aged adults who read *Planet Comics* when they were young, have no clear memory of Voltamen yet are quick to recall the metropolis wasteland of "The Lost World" — just as others who haven't read an EC horror comic since 1954 are unable to remember specific stories but can vividly recall Ingels' Old Witch.



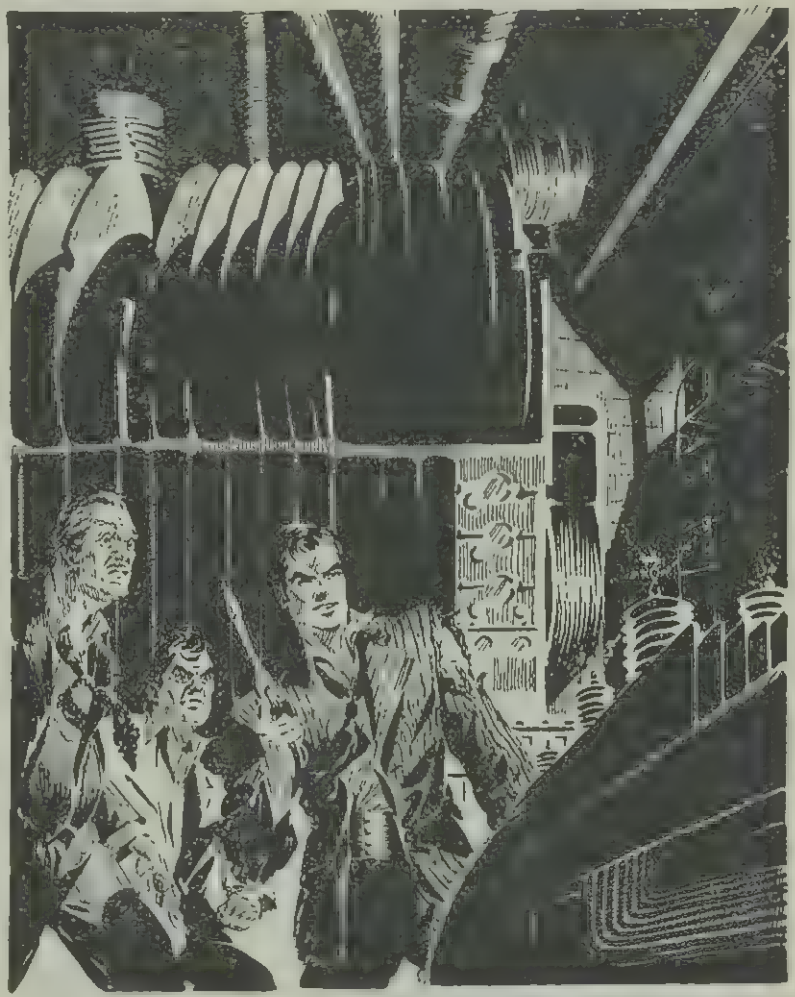
With issue #24 of *Planet Comics,* Ingels became the artist on "The Lost World," carrying it up to #31 when it was taken over by others, including George Evans, another artist who left Fiction House to later join EC. The byline on "Lost World" was "Thornecliffe Herrick," a house pseudonym for several writers — including science-fantasy author Jerome Bixby, scripter of "Mirror, Mirror" and several other *Star Trek* episodes, and author of "It's A Good Life," a story that later became one of the best *Twilight Zone* segments. Bixby was also something of a cartoonist, illustrating his 2-page text story ("Unposted") in *Planet Comics* #61. The writer's byline on "Unposted" was the ubiquitous Thornecliffe Herrick, but Bixby signed his own name to the spot drawing of a bug-eyed quadrapod that looked like nothing so much as an anthropomorphized alien potato sprouting tendrils from its head.

Ingels also came in at the end of the second series of *Planet Comics'* long-running "Auro, Lord of Jupiter," an episodic adventure which debuted in the first issue (drawn by Dick Briefer, who went on to write

Juggernaut of Space

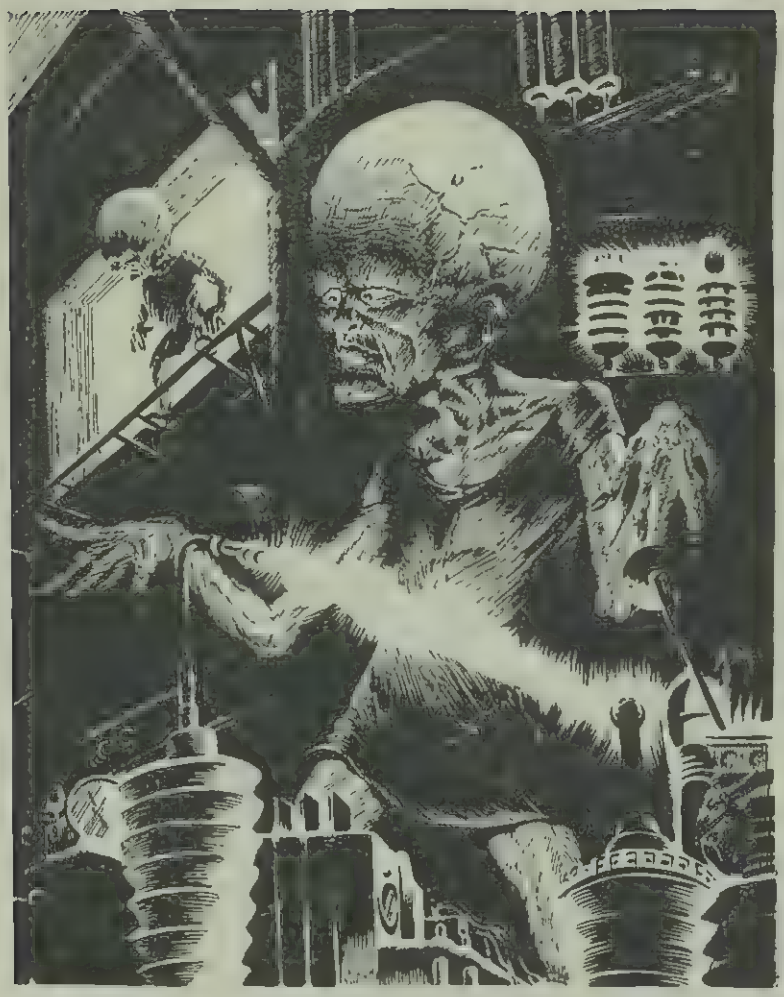
By RAY CUMMINGS

Never had the mind of man conceived so horrible a doom as was reaching for Earth. Never had a greater need for Earth's valiant champions been needed. And yet the only ones who could fight the menace—were five futile humans, prisoners on another world.



and illustrate Prize Comics' highly successful *Frankenstein* during 1945-54). "Auro," set in the 21st Century, began with a professor and his family en route through the outer reaches of the solar system when they crash on Jupiter. Only the professor's son survives, gaining super-strength as he grows to manhood and becomes the leader of others on the planet. Many "Auro" stories of this period were drawn by Rafael Astarita, a close friend of Ingels and co-worker in the Iger shop. The series was discontinued with issue #29, but in #41 "Auro" began anew as a somewhat different character. After scientist Chester Edson gets conked on the noggin and tossed in a rocketship which once again crashes on Jupiter, his spirit, through the wonders of Jovian science, is used to revive the deceased Auro — with both personalities eventually residing in one body. Half a dozen different artists kept this storyline going, with Ingels handling it from #56 until "Auro" concluded in issue #61.

Other Fiction House comic book art by Ingels includes episodes of "Commando Ranger" and "Sea Devil" *(Rangers),* "Suicide Smith" *(Rangers* and *Jumbo)* and "Clipper Kirk" *(Wings).* Between jobs for these comics, Ingels took on *Planet Stories* assignments that included both cover and some interiors for the Spring, 1944, issue. Apparently this was his only cover for a pulp magazine. By comparison with other Fiction House pulp cover artists of the period such as Allen Anderson *(Action Stories)* and Jerome Rozen *(Wings),* Ingels' *Planet Stories* effort is probably less effective in its newsstand display value. Colors aren't quite as bright, composition isn't as dramatically arranged as it could be, and figure rendering is softer around the edges than the sharply defined lighting contrasts of his colleagues' techniques. But



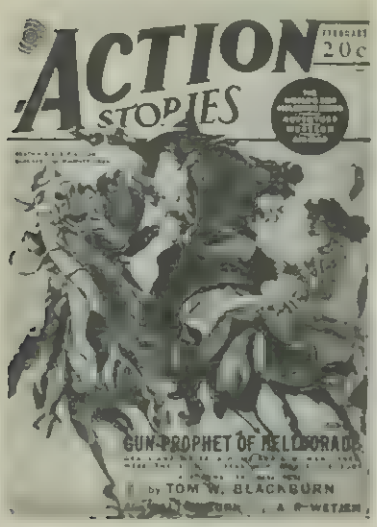
This page and opposite: Two-page spread and two spot illustrations from PLANET STORIES, Fall 1945

when it came to the black-and-white chiaroscuro of interior illustrations, Ingels was on firmer ground. His drawings were on a par with (if not superior to) those of more experienced Fiction House pulp regulars — C.A. Murphy, Harry Burne, H.W. Kiemle, Nicholas Viscardi (Nick Cardy, who also drew for many of Fiction House's comics throughout the Forties, including a 1943 stint on "The Lost World") and Edwin J. Smalle. In the years that followed, the careers of Ingels and Edwin Smalle took parallel trajectories. Both were employed by the Famous Artists School, and in the same issue with Ingels' lead story in *Haunt of Fear* #8 (July-August, 1951) one finds "Diminishing Returns," Smalle's only contribution to EC.

After his discharge from the Navy, Ingels left Fiction House and became an art director/editor in 1947 for Ned Pines, publisher of the Better/Standard/Nedor comic book line that included *Startling Comics, Thrilling Comics* and *The Black Terror.* Standard, like Fiction House, was also a purveyor of pulp magazines *(Startling Stories, Thrilling Stories)* which gave birth to comic book counterparts. Ingels' work at Standard, however, was only for the company's comics. *Mad's* Jerry De Fuccio, suggesting that Ingels was "demoralized" by Standard Publications and Ned Pines, notes that Ingels had the "demeaning" task, along with production associate Rafael Astarita, of touching up "a large quantity of very bad art which publisher Pines had bought very cheaply from 'artist' Ken Battefield." Astarita himself recently described those days:

"I remember Graham Ingels as an intelligent man of unfailing good humor. He was funny, quick thinking and intuitive. I could hardly have asked for a better working partner. Graham and I worked as a team for Better Publications for ten months. Our job was to try to salvage a huge pile of drawings done during World War II and no longer acceptable material now that the artists were returning to civilian life, and once again doing better stuff than the rubbish on which we worked. Almost all of it was the work of one person and might best be compared to something done by an arthritic aborigine, working with a charred hyena leg on a deflated buffalo bladder, while riding a lame camel through a sandstorm. The stuff we worked on

Cover by Allen Anderson



was so badly drawn we couldn't correct the heads, so we drew new heads on strips of paper, cut them out and cemented them in place.

"This proved to be insanely boring. Our burden was lightened a little by pretty secretaries and switchboard operators who passed the glass encased office in which we worked. Encouraged by our smiles and waves, they began coming in and asking what in the world we were doing. I don't remember what inspired us to tell them we took the work so we could pool our money and open a bawdy house in Panama. They were, or pretended to be, shocked, and said we were 'awful,' but they dropped by each day to learn more details, which Graham and I invented to pique their interest. The curious thing is that each day that passed they were less offended by the idea, and it occurred to us that in some strange way they envied the imaginary adventures we concocted to amuse ourselves. Perhaps Kipling wasn't far wrong when he said 'The colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady were sisters under the skin.'"

For Standard, Ingels continued to do space opera material not substantially different from that in *Planet Comics,* writing scripts ("Lance Lewis, Space Detective" and "Tygra") for *Startling Comics,* while also doing cover illustrations. His covers for *Startling Comics* #44-46 reportedly were done with airbrush technique, but a close

COCKPIT OF FEAR

By Willian Porter

They say that once a flyer loses his nerve, he never gets it back. But you never can tell, chum. You never can tell at all.

SAVE PAPER!

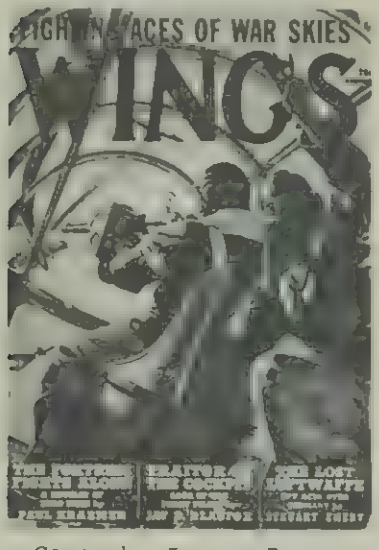
PAPER is a war commodity. You can help conserve it by purchasing your copy of WINGS from the same dealer each time it appears. This will help him plan his order for the number of copies he'll need and will eliminate waste caused by unsold copies that must be transported elsewhere. Please co-operate.

Cover by Lee Elias

look at the comics doesn't bear that out. The art is black-and-white line drawing, with conventional coloring. However, Ingels later experimented with the combination of line drawing and painted effect on his cover for EC's *Saddle Romances* #9 (November-December, 1949) — a technique involving partial black-and-white line art for the characters' faces, with modeling filled in by the controlled use of color areas.

Ingels also freelanced for a variety of other comic book publishers during the Forties: Eastern Color (a 1946 story in *Heroic* #39 and two stories plus a cover painting for #41), Magazine Enterprises ("The Duke" for *Manhunt* and covers for *Trail Colt*), Hillman ("Buffalo Bill"), D.S. Publishing (three stories in 1948 for *Outlaws*), covers for *Gunsmoke* #1-6 plus the "Masked Marvel" story in the first issue of *Gunsmoke* (a title not related to the radio and TV series), and 1948 work for Victor Fox.

This late Forties period of prolific freelancing, after Ingels left Pines (when *Startling Comics* folded with its January, 1948, issue), eventually brought Ingels to 225 Lafayette Street where he first appeared in an EC comic with a story called "Smokin' Six Guns" in the Spring, 1948, issue of *War Against Crime* — soon followed by stories for *Gunfighter, Crime Patrol, Modern Love, A Moon, A Girl... Romance, Saddle Justice* and *Sad-*



Cover by Jerome Rozen

"It will be put to good use?" inquired the bearded leader.

HELL'S ACES

By H. P. S. GREENE

Illustrated by GRAHAM INGELS

They gave Sam Sneed the chance of a lifetime—to die like a rat in the sewers of Paris. But what if he could rally the Hidden Ones, the horribly exiled Broken Faces burning to blast the shadows that lay over Paris?

ABOVE AND AT LEFT: Ingels' illustrations from Fiction House's pulp magazine WINGS (Summer 1943), and the issue's cover. OPPOSITE PAGE: Ingels' illustration for ACTION STORIES (February 1943), and the issue's cover. Fiction House had no comic book counterpart for this pulp (unlike their WINGS COMICS), the title ACTION COMICS being owned by National Periodicals since 1938.

dle Romances, in addition to eleven covers for many of these same issues. EC publisher Bill Gaines later recalled:

"In the early days of EC we had Graham typecast into the Western books. When we started the love books we used him there for a few stories, but he didn't seem to fit. When we started the horror titles, we didn't use Graham because we thought he'd be good at it — we used him because whenever an artist came into the fold, we had to use him for something. So we just stuck Ingels into the horror books, and it didn't take us very long to realize what had happened...that Ingels was Mr. Horror himself."

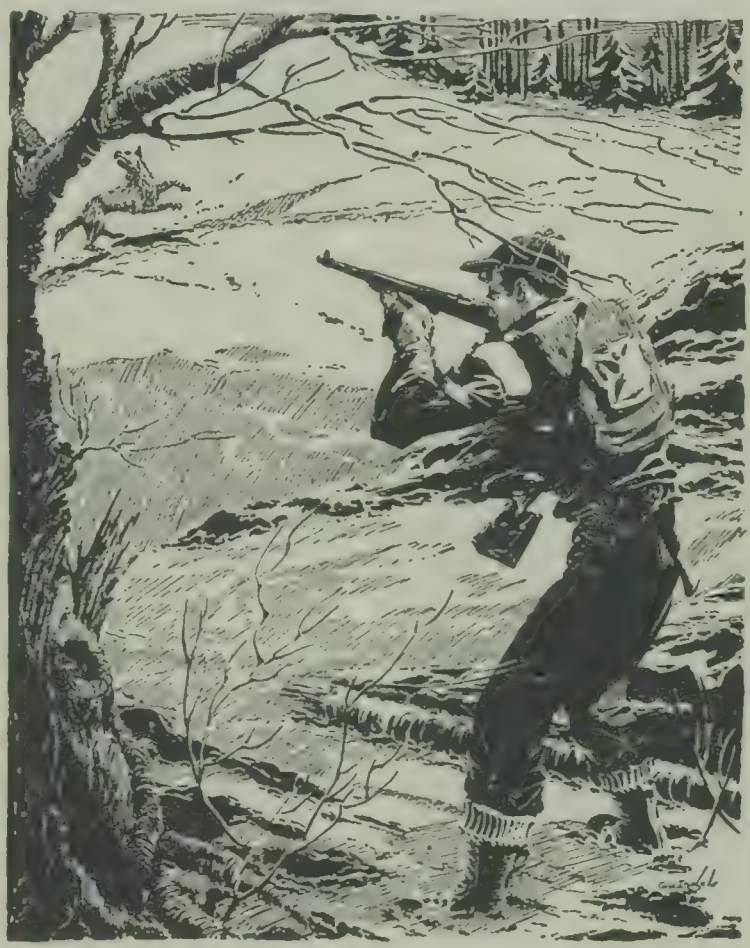
Ingels then proceeded, from 1950 to 1956, to deliver the best work of his career for just about all of EC's New Trend, New Direction and Picto-Fiction titles. But, curiously, despite his previous portfolio of science fiction for *Startling Comics, Planet Comics* and *Planet Stories,* he did only one EC science fiction story, "House, in Time," for an early issue of *Weird Science* (November-December, 1950). Instead, he specialized in the execution of what Frank Jacobs in *The Mad World of William M. Gaines* (Lyle Stuart, Inc., 1972) has described at "cadaverous inkings."

The short-lived Picto-Fiction magazines *(Crime Illustrated, Shock Illustrated, Terror Illustrated, Confessions Illustrated,* each lasting only two issues), were EC's attempt at combining pulp prose and artwork into a single format, featuring running text integrated with an average of four illustrations per page. These 64-page 25¢ black-and-white magazines, cover blurbed as "A New Form of Adult Entertainment," brought Ingels back to the pulp medium he had left a decade earlier — essentially doing spot drawings for prose that didn't need illustrations to carry the narratives. Thanks to better paper and improved printing quality, however, his work came into sharper focus. There were other important differences: 25 or 30 drawings accompanied each story (almost as many as in a typical six-page comic book story) and Ingels, by 1955-56, was a much more polished artist.

THE KILLER

by WILLIAM MARSHALL RUSH

A brief drama of the northwest, and of the implacable stalking of his victims by Cod Crout—the man whose gun had never missed.



Cod shot, and the coyote leaped high in death.

NORTHWEST ROMANCES, Summer 1945

His illustrations for "The Basket" *(Terror Illustrated* #1) and "Requiem" *(Terror Illustrated* #2) show a refined pulp style using drybrush and pebblegrain coquille board effects — throwbacks to the techniques he and other pulp illustrators worked with in the Thirties and Forties. With the EC Picto-Fictions Ingels reached the apex of his pulp-derived Gothic atmospherics.

Why did Graham Ingels, after years of doing undistinguished to mediocre to fair work for Fiction House and others, suddenly stretch himself at EC, delineating what amounted to a *delirium tremens* on paper, grappling with grotesqueries of art and life in a body of work that ranks him among the masters of horror? According to EC editor Al Feldstein, Ingels simply found EC totally liberating:

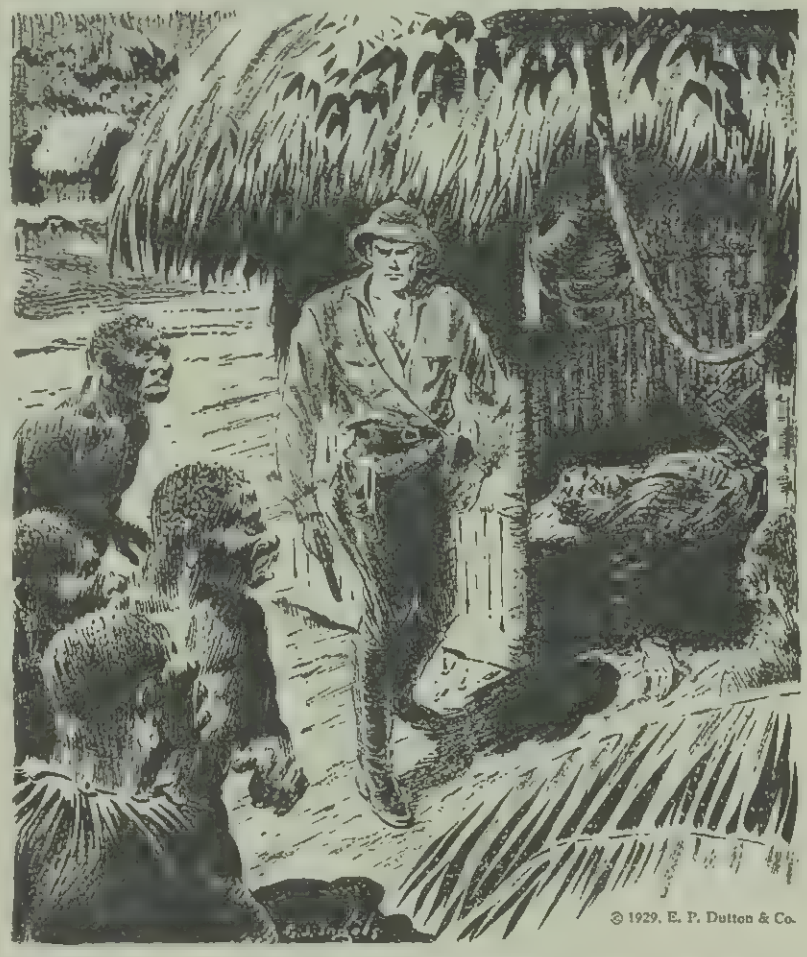
"Ingels was trapped in his own personal technique, and he was trapped by the thinking of the editors before EC. Wherever he worked he was forced to work in the accepted comic styles to please the editors. So he struggled and bastardized his own natural technique to create the accepted styles in comics. When he came to EC, we didn't set up these limitations. We encouraged him to develop his own screwball, hairy black-and-white style. That's why he developed the way he did, and that's why his work stands out. Whether it was a good story or bad story, Graham Ingels' work stands out because of his technique — which was a product of his total makeup, his physical, psychological, emotional makeup."

During his EC years Ingels lived on Long Island, dividing his time between Whitestone and his summer home in Smithtown. After the EC books folded, he drew historical/Westerns for *Treasure Chest* and *Classics Illustrated* between 1957 and 1959. These stories, which rank among his weakest and least interesting, were his last work for comic books. Continuing to live on Long Island, he taught painting for a while. He then accepted a full-time position as a staff instructor for students taking the heavily advertised correspondence courses offered by the Famous Artists

THE FLAMING GOD

By FRANCIS GERARD

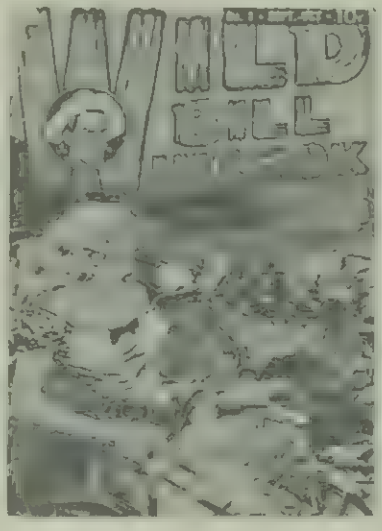
It was Sanders' task to stop a jungle revolt —and to capture a murderous god whose body glowed with a silver flame.

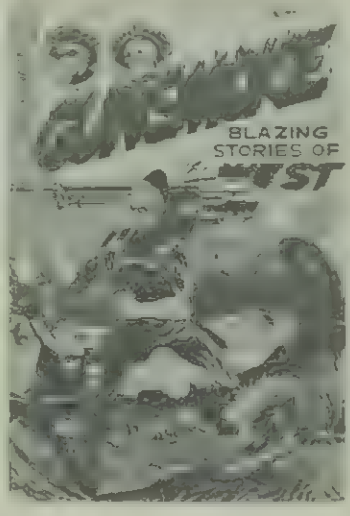


JUNGLE STORIES, Winter 1943-44

© 1929, E. P. Dutton & Co.

A continuation of the famous Edgar Wallace Character, "Sanders of the River"





10
ENTS
March
#41
That's a
FAMOUS
FUNNIES
Publication
HEREIN ARE STORIES OF TRULY HEROIC MEN AND WOMEN CHOSEN BY THIS PUBLICATION FOR THEIR DARING ACTIONS IN HAZARDOUS TASKS

10¢
WONDER
COMICS
No. 11

WONDER
COMICS
No. 12

STARTLING
COMICS
10¢

Featuring The FIGHTING YANK, Super-Patriot
STARTLING
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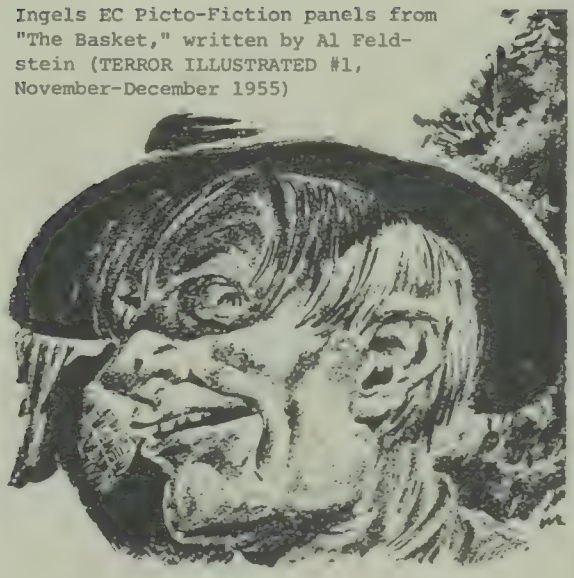
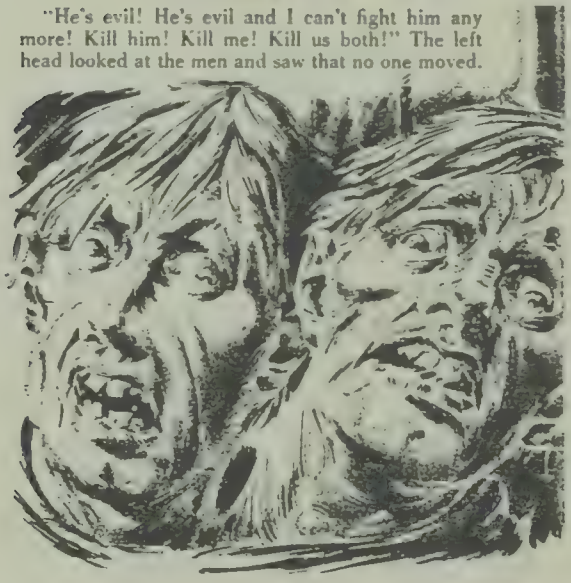
10¢
JULY
No 46

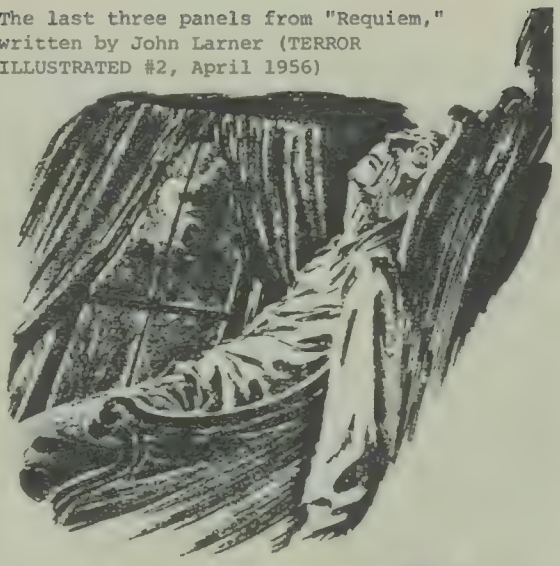
Ingels EC Picto-Fiction panels from "The Basket," written by Al Feldstein (TERROR ILLUSTRATED #1, November-December 1955)

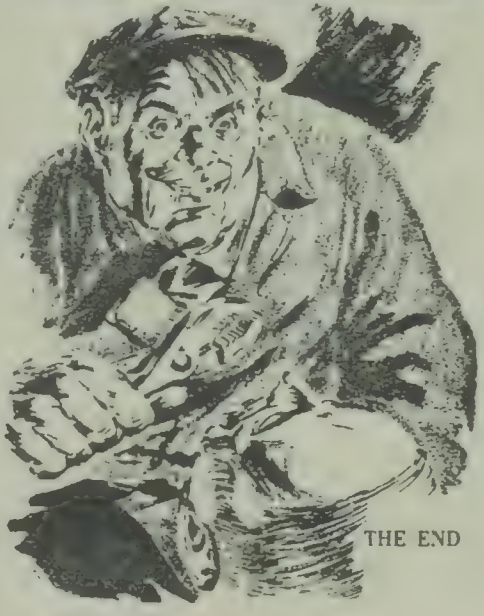


"He's evil! He's evil and I can't fight him any more! Kill him! Kill me! Kill us both!" The left head looked at the men and saw that no one moved.



The last three panels from "Requiem," written by John Larner (TERROR ILLUSTRATED #2, April 1956)





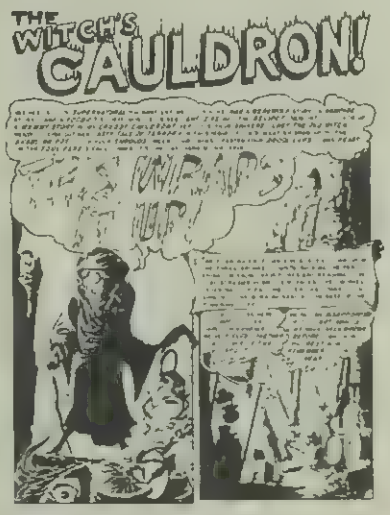
THE END

ABOVE: An early Ingels page, from PLANET COMICS #26, September 1943.

The photo from Ingels' "EC Artist of the Issue" biography in THE HAUNT OF FEAR #10, November-December 1951.

School of Westport, Connecticut. Eventually, Ingels moved to Florida to work with a graphic arts studio in Miami. However, even as Ingels retreated from the world of popular genre art, his work for EC began receiving international acclaim through various reprints — such as the inclusion of "About Face" from *The Haunt of Fear* #27 (September-October 1954) in the 488-page French hardcover *Les Chefs-D'Oeuvre de la Bande Dessinee.*

When *Fanfare* (in its earlier format under the title of *Graphic Story Magazine*) devoted 22 pages to the career of Ingels' friend, illustrator Howard Nostrand, the publication of that material prompted Nostrand to return to the comic book field after a twenty-year absence. Will Graham Ingels ever again summon forth the eldritch visions that have made him a Lovecraftian legend throughout the world? While waiting for the answer, we end this piece by quoting the apropos title of Ingels' story in EC's *Tales From the Crypt* #35, April-May, 1953:



Farewell — GHASTLY

FICTION HOUSE & The Shadow

BY RAFAEL ASTARITA

When I was told about him at Fiction House I said there could be no such person. Everyone laughed and said they were understating everything about the guy. I thought I was being taken and laughed.

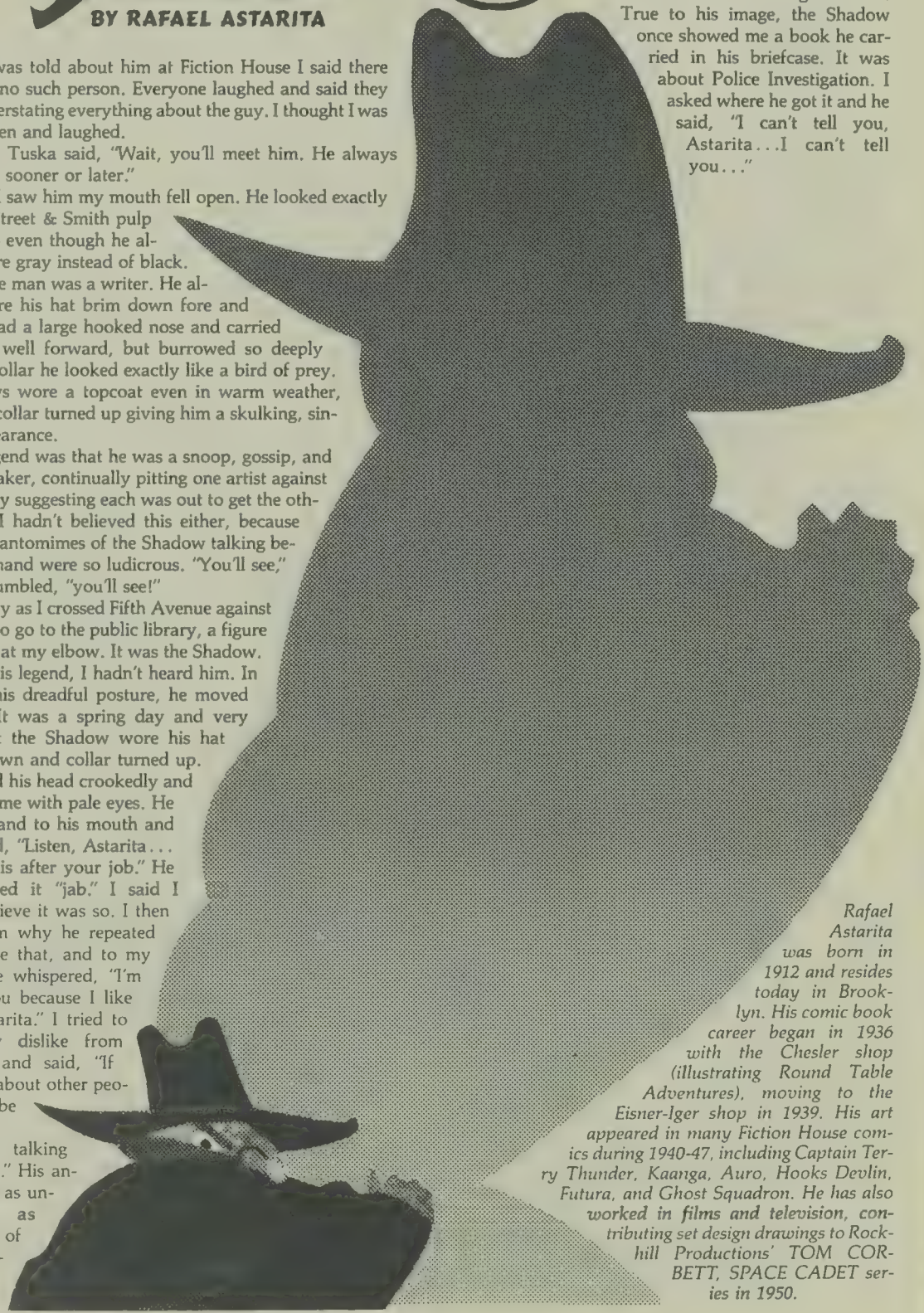
George Tuska said, "Wait, you'll meet him. He always shows up sooner or later."

When I saw him my mouth fell open. He looked exactly like the Street & Smith pulp covers — even though he always wore gray instead of black. I think the man was a writer. He always wore his hat brim down fore and aft. He had a large hooked nose and carried his head well forward, but burrowed so deeply into his collar he looked exactly like a bird of prey. He always wore a topcoat even in warm weather, with the collar turned up giving him a skulking, sinister appearance.

The legend was that he was a snoop, gossip, and troublemaker, continually pitting one artist against another by suggesting each was out to get the other's job. I hadn't believed this either, because Tuska's pantomimes of the Shadow talking behind his hand were so ludicrous. "You'll see," George rumbled, "you'll see!"

One day as I crossed Fifth Avenue against the light to go to the public library, a figure appeared at my elbow. It was the Shadow. True to his legend, I hadn't heard him. In spite of his dreadful posture, he moved silently. It was a spring day and very mild, but the Shadow wore his hat pulled down and collar turned up. He turned his head crookedly and stared at me with pale eyes. He put his hand to his mouth and whispered, "Listen, Astarita... someone is after your job." He pronounced it "jab." I said I didn't believe it was so. I then asked him why he repeated things like that, and to my horror he whispered, "I'm telling you because I like you, Astarita." I tried to keep my dislike from showing and said, "If you talk about other people maybe someday you'll be talking about me." His answer was as unpleasant as the rest of the previous conversation. "I like you. I wouldn't talk about you if I caught you fucking a dog."

I can laugh about it now, but the whole experience was so repellent it took me several hours to get over it. True to his image, the Shadow once showed me a book he carried in his briefcase. It was about Police Investigation. I asked where he got it and he said, "I can't tell you, Astarita...I can't tell you..."



Rafael Astarita was born in 1912 and resides today in Brooklyn. His comic book career began in 1936 with the Chesler shop (illustrating Round Table Adventures), moving to the Eisner-Iger shop in 1939. His art appeared in many Fiction House comics during 1940-47, including Captain Terry Thunder, Kaanga, Auro, Hooks Devlin, Futura, and Ghost Squadron. He has also worked in films and television, contributing set design drawings to Rockhill Productions' TOM CORBETT, SPACE CADET series in 1950.

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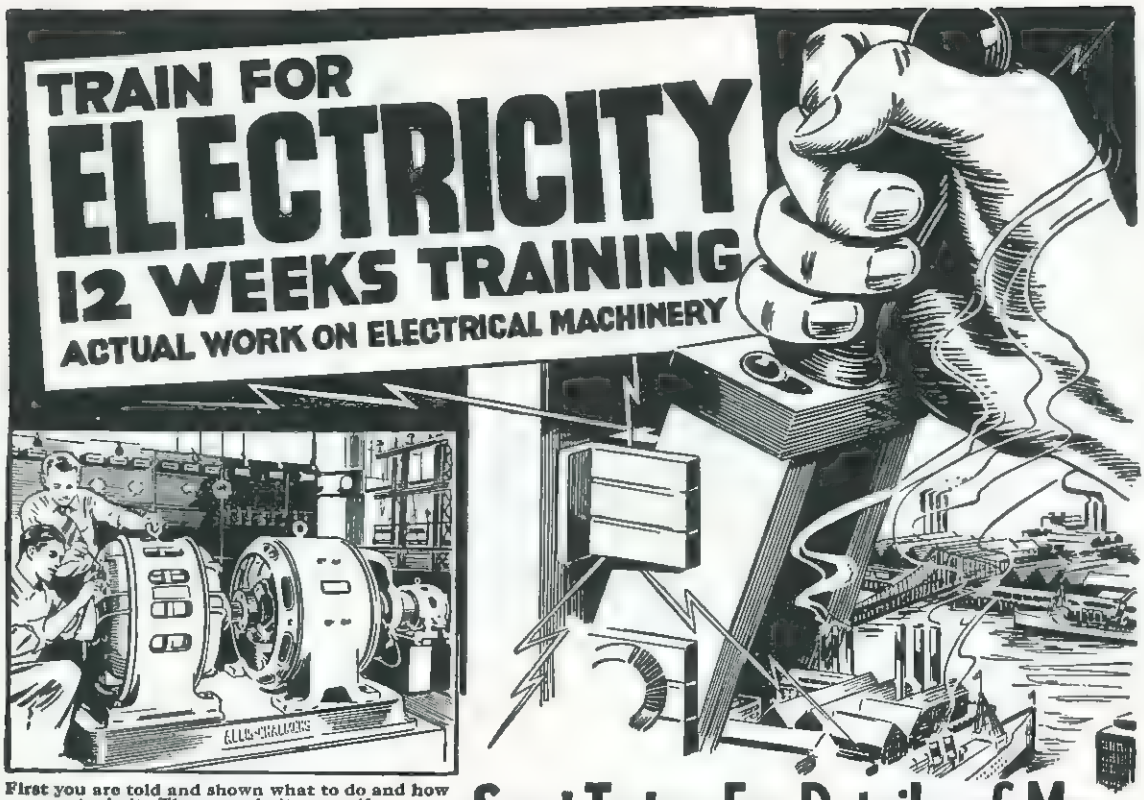
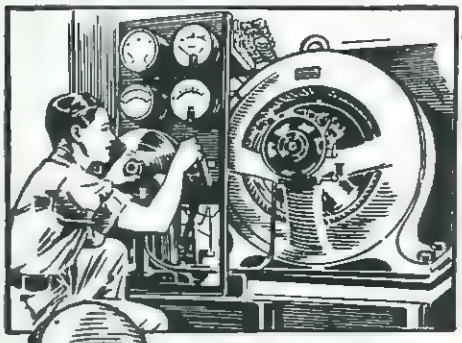


First you are told and shown what to do and how to do it. Then you do it yourself.



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Don't let lack of money hold you back. If you need part-time work to help out with living expenses while you train, my employment department will help you find it. We also give you **valuable lifetime employment service** after you graduate. And remember this: If you are short of money you can **get this training first and pay for most of it beginning 60 days after you graduate — in** 12 monthly payments.

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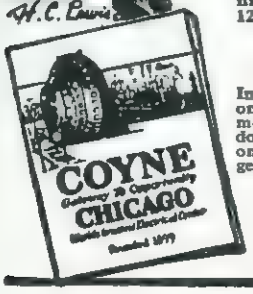

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A MAN'S PASTIME

AFTER THE DAY'S WORK- FIRST A SATISFYING DINNER... A WELL-CRUSTED PIPE... AND A TALE OF DARING IN SOME DISTANT LAND.

MEN HAVE ALWAYS CRAVED A TOUCH OF HARD-HITTING ADVENTURE TO WILE AWAY THE SLOW EVENING HOURS.

NOWHERE WILL YOU FIND SUCH A TREASURY OF CLEAN-CUT, EXCITING ACTION STORIES AS IN THESE *Fiction House Magazines.*

3 OF THE WELL-KNOWN *Fiction House* MAGAZINES

Look for the **FICTION HOUSE** *Bull's Eye*

THE ILLUSTORIES OF CHARLES BIRO

In comics as in every other form of fictional entertainment, *the story is the thing.* With all the preoccupation with flashy illustration, jazzy breakdowns, cosmic conflict "plots" and sweaty relevance, not many seem to care that there are pathetically few solid stories under all that glitzy stuff. Most comic book scripting is at best uninspired, and too often abominably incompetent. In fact, that has always been the case; and that is the reason the graphic story form (in America at least) has not come close to realizing its potential —save for isolated cases like Carl Barks— and why the form has not garnered the respect, success and adult market it might. Without a good story as base, any graphic story will be, ultimately, a failure, no matter how excellent the artwork. Competent, visually appealing illustration, exciting and innovative breakdowns deserve to be admired, studied and collected in their own right, of course. But, if the story is not there, the total effort is empty. Storytelling by the combination of words and pictures is what comics are about, after all. And there have been too few solid storytellers who have worked in comics —scripters who could construct tight plots, who had a good ear for dialogue, who had a feel for characterization, who had interesting and non-hackneyed ideas for stories. Charles Biro was one of the few; and he was, in my view, one of the most talented writers to work for comics, and is certainly the most underappreciated.

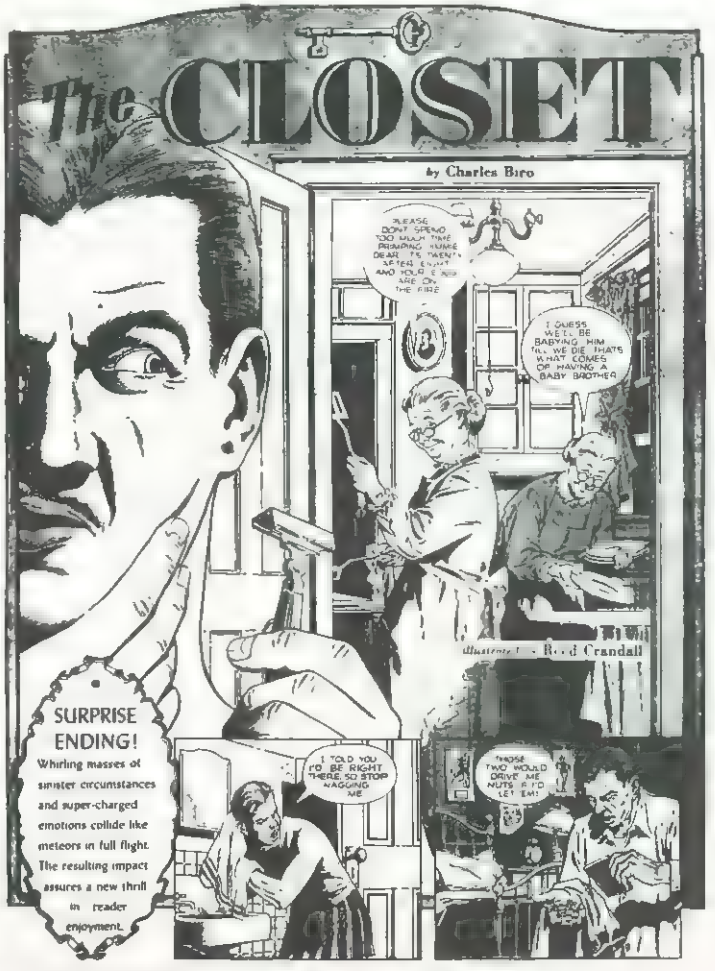
Biro was a man who enjoyed spinning yarns. And that very fact serves to set Biro apart from the vast majority of comic book scripters. Then and now, most comic book writing springs not from the storytelling impulse but from the necessity of producing a successful total product of a certain sort. Most writers in the superhero, action-adventure genre tailor their scripts to the sales-determined conventions of that genre; the stories are designed so as to provide lots of fast, splashy action and fights, the *raison d'etre* for costumed heroes. When fights were played down in the 1950s the emphasis shifted to gimmick stories pegged to the mystique of the costumed hero—secret identity, powers and the like (the Weisinger Syndrome). The actual telling of the tale—working out a plot, devising characters, writing dialogue and narration—was attended to by the scripter only after the springboard for the story was set, with sales in mind (which often meant working backwards from the cover, e.g. Gardner Fox's science fiction stories for DC).

BY ART SCOTT

During his prime period, Biro worked the other way around. He simply got an idea for a story—a subject, a locale, a character, a moral—and proceeded to spin out an entertaining yarn from that premise. Never mind that a particular idea didn't allow for fisticuffs, or that the usual star of the book couldn't plausibly be given a starring role; if the idea seemed right to Biro, if he felt confident that his youthful audience would be entertained by it, he would go ahead. Biro was a *natural storyteller.* For such people, a tale comes to life practically full-blown in the mind, and seems to unravel from start to finish without conscious effort. From about 1946 to 1950 in *Boy* and *Daredevil,* Biro produced a series of stories of exceptional variety, complexity and depth, peopled with a large and constantly shifting cast of interesting characters. The plot ideas, for comic books at any rate, were novel. And the books were successful. In 1949 the combined monthly circulation of Biro's Big Three *(Boy, Daredevil, Crime Does Not Pay)* ranked tenth among *all* magazines, right up there with *Life* and *Look.* Actual circulation figures weren't given in the second class mailing statements, but the books of that era carried "Over 5 million readers monthly" on the covers, which even allowing for the usual pass-around multiplier, is an impressive figure.

The Gleason Line

Lev Gleason Publications started in 1939 with *Silver Streak,* a typical Golden Age superhero comic featuring the title hero and Daredevil (the original, a boomerang-tossing non-super character with two-tone costume), battling the usual menaces, Nazis and Japs.


The CLOSET
by Charles Biro
PLEASE DON'T SPEND TOO MUCH TIME PRAMPING HOME DEAR, IT'S TIME I'VE SPENT AFTER EIGHT AND YOUR E ARE ON THE FIRE
I GUESS WE'LL BE BABYING HIM TILL WE DIE. THAT'S WHAT COMES OF HAVING A BABY BROTHER
illustrated by Reed Crandall
SURPRISE ENDING!
Whirling masses of sinister circumstances and super-charged emotions collide like meteors in full flight. The resulting impact assures a new thrill in reader enjoyment.
I TOLD YOU I'D BE RIGHT THERE, SO STOP NAGGING ME
THOSE TWO WOULD DRIVE ME NUTS IF I'D LET 'EM!

The lead story from **Tops** *#1 (July, 1949), Biro's 25-cent adult magazine. Drawn by Reed Crandall, "The Closet," reproduced in its entirety on the following pages, shows Biro's approach to his coined term "Illustories." Crandall, one of the finest comic book artists of the Forties and Fifties, is best known for his long tenure on Quality's* **Blackhawk** *(1942-53) and in EC's science fiction, horror and war titles (1953-55). Crandall was born in 1917 and began his comic book career in 1940 with the Iger-Eisner shop illustrating "The Old Witch" (no connection with EC's character of the same name), going on to draw for almost every publisher in the business well into the Sixties. Though Crandall accumulated numerous esoteric illustration credits over the years, "The Closet" is perhaps the most obscure.*

All Gleason illustrations ©Lev Gleason Publications Inc

JIMMIE WHAT'S KEEPING YOU SO LONG? YOU'RE GOING TO BE LATE AGAIN LIKE YOU WERE LAST TUESDAY IT'S EIGHT THIRTY JIMMIE!
ALL RIGHT ALL RIGHT I KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS
JIMMIE, GUESS WHERE I WAS THIS MORNING AT 8 AM ALL THE TIME I WAS BURIED UNDER TWO TONS OF COAL! FOR THE LAST CLOCK TWO MONTHS IT DRAG MEN HEART TO KNOW HIM DEAD LIKE THAT
IF YOU DON'T GET THAT BROKEN BRIDGE OF YOURS CLEANED, YOU'RE GONNA SWALLOW ONE OF THE PIECES
YOU KNOW GOOD AND WELL WHY CK ISN'T FIXED! WHAT'S THE USE OF ASKING YOU FOR MONEY
THAT'S A HOT ONE SO MUCH FOR DOUGH! SHAME ME FOR DOUGH IF I WAS ME I WOULD STARVE TO DEATH IF YOU DIE A LITTLE LESS JABBERING AND A LITTLE MORE THINKING ABOUT ECONOMY MAYBE YOU'D SAVE SOME THING OUT OF THE TEN BUCKS I GIVE EVERY WEEK
HEY JIM! DWYER WANTS LOOKING FOR YOU!
YEAH? THANKS!
HOW DID YOU DO YESTERDAY, JIM?
OH, PRETTY GOOD, MR DWYER
I MEAN, WHAT DID YOU TAKE IN? HOW MUCH?
OH ABOU? THE SAME AS THE OTHERS I GUESS. THIS NEEDY CASES FUND IS A GREAT IDEA, OR YOU'LL AIN DWYER. YOU'VE GOT THE BLESSINGS OF THE WHOLE CITY THERE IS THE KIND OF THING THAT MAKES ME PROUD I WORK FOR YOU, MR DWYER!
THANKS FOR THE KIND WORDS, JIM. AND NOW TELL ME EXACTLY WHAT AMOUNT YOU TOOK IN YESTERDAY
OH YEAH, YEAH SURE—JUST A MINUTE. I GOT IT RIGHT HERE SOMEWHERE... YEAH, HERE IT IS. ERR THREE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-TWO DOLLARS MOSTLY IN CHECKS

YOU'VE EITHER BEEN SLEEPING ON THE JOB OR YOU CAN'T COUNT STRAIGHT. WHICH IS IT? EVERYONE ELSE TALLIED NEARLY DOUBLE AMOUNT YESTERDAY
I WASN'T FEELING GOOD IT'S MY STOMACH MY SISTER ELSIE IS DOWN WITH THE SAME THING. I GUESS IT MUST BE THE WATER OR SOMETHIN DON'T WORRY THOUGH I'LL CATCH UP MR DWYER
IT'S MY HUNCH THAT JIM GARTH'S BEEN POCKETING SOME OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS SINCE THE NEEDY CASES DRIVE WAS STARTED. HOW ABOUT YOU FINDING A WAY TO PREVENT ANY FURTHER THIEVERY
OKAY DWYER THEN WHY NOT PUBLISH THE DAILY LISTS NOT ONLY OF THE AMOUNT BUT ALSO OF THE DONORS? RESIDENTS MAY BE TEMPTED TO, OF COURSE I DON'T APPROVE OF THAT KIND OF GIVING, BUT SOME FOLKS LIKE AN AUDIENCE WHEN THEY DROP A NICKEL IN A TIN CUP
THAT SHOULD CERTAINLY STOP HIM AS THOUGH AIN'T DOUBLE F WE COULD PROVE OUR SUSPICIONS YET IF HE STARTS KEEPS IT UP HE'LL SLIP THE NOOSE AROUND HIS NECK. IT'S THE WAY HE WOULDN'T LOOK AT ME—THE WAY HE RUMBLED THINGS IN HIS HANDS
WELL I'LL GET RIGHT TO WORK ON IT FOR THE MORNING RUN-SAY HOW ARE WE GOING TO FIND A WAY TO THOSE PEOPLE WHO GAVE DONATIONS, HOW NOW? SOME OF THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT GAVE A WEEK AGO ARE GOING TO WANT CREDIT FOR SUCH? THAT?
THINK I'M A CINCH! WE'VE GOT A COMPLETE LIST OF DONORS FROM THE 30 DAY I'LL JUST HAVE TO REWRITE AND TELL THEM IT'S ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF THE END
NOW LET'S SEE YOU TRY AND FIGURE ANYTHING WITH THESE ENVELOPES BUSINESS THERE'S NO RECORD IT NEVER SAW THEM I'LL SAY DOWN AND WASH MY SISTER MAYBE I WON'T TAKE QUITE SO MUCH CASH
LISTEN EVERYBODY! WE'RE STARTING A NEW SYSTEM ON THE NEEDY CASES DRIVE FROM NOW ON. WE'RE PUBLISHING THE NAMES OF ALL THE CONTRIBUTORS. SO BE EXTRA CAREFUL TO WRITE YOUR RECORDS LEGIBLY SO THE TYPESETTERS GET THE NAMES SPELLED RIGHT. WE ARE ALSO WITH NO PREVIOUS GOOD SCHOOLS

I'LL MAKE MAMIE THINK I SAVED A LOT OF MONEY. SHE'LL THINK I WAS STINGY WITH US. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN BEER AND SECOND BALCONY. SURE THAT'S WHAT SHE'LL THINK. THEY SAY A SINGLE CAN HAVE A COUPLE OF SERVANTS AND A PATIO IN MEXICO FOR TWENTY BUCKS A WEEK
OH YOU AGAIN HOLD THE PHONE
OH, THAT DOPE JIM GARTH ON THE PHONE. HE WANTS TO TALK TO MRS DWYER. I'LL GO SEE IF THAT CHEAPSKATE MAMIE'S YOU'VE BEEN DAVIN HIM SO IO A WEEK
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN I USED TO THINK THAT SAME AS YOU. BUT SOMEHOW MUST'VE COME OVER THE OLD LOOK IT WHAT HE GAVE ME LAST FRIDAY
JIMMY WON'T SAY TELL THAT? HE MUSTA WON PLAYIN PINBALL. THAT GUY WOULDN'T SPEND A NICKEL
THAT AIN'T ALL! HE TOOK ME TO A REAL CLASSY NIGHTCLUB. AN HE ORDERED CHAMPAGNE NO KIDDIN REAL CHAMPAGNE. AND THEN NOW PROWSE AN WON'T YOU GUESS WHAT HE GAVE ME A TOOTH OF HIS HORSE! A DOLLAR BILL THAT WAS WHAT HE GAVE A HORSE
I'M GAME AS LONG AS HE ACTS LIKE HE APPRECIATES WHAT MOWS ME A WOOD TAKE BE CRAZY NOT TO LIKE EVEN A INSIDER MARVYN
HELLO JIM? THIS IS MAMIE I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT YOU SICK IN BED I WOULD LIKE TO COME OVER SHE'S ASLEEP BY NINE O'CLOCK AND WE CAN TALK AN PLAY CARDS OR SOMETHING
THAT'S WONDERFUL MAMIE I'LL BE OVER IMPORTANT?
ALTERATIONS TAKE TWO DAYS BUT MAYBE THE TAILOR WILL DO IT WHILE YOU WAIT IF YOU SLIP HIM AN EXTRA BUCK
TELL HIM I'LL GIVE HIM FIVE IF HE MAKES THEM EXTRA SNAPPY—AN WHILE I'M WRITING YOU CAN SHOW ME SOME OTHER SILK-A HAT AN SOME SHIRTS
YOU LOOK ELEGANT
ELSIE THESE SHEETS ARE FILTHY AND MARY'S GOT THE ONLY CLEAN ONES LOCKED IN THAT CLOSET WE DON'T GET THEM BEACH DAY HAVE TO DO WITH ONE SET FOR THE WHOLE MONTH
HE'S JUST AWFUL IMAGINE WHY HE'D WANT TO LOCK THAT CLOSET IN THE FIRST PLACE? AFTER ALL WE ARE HIS SISTERS
COULD WE GET THE SUPERINTENDENT TO UNLOCK IT WITH HIS SKELETON KEY?
LET'S DO THAT JANE BUT WE'LL HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO DO OR SAY ANYTHING THAT'LL BE AWFULLY EMBARRASSING IF HE FOUND OUT! I'M NOT A BIT INTERESTED IN WHAT'S IN THERE

HE THERE AM I I'LL TELL HIM ANYTHING TO SAY TO HIM!
WHY IT'S MISS GARY COME IN AND HAVE A CUP OF COFFEE WITH US I JUST MADE A FRESH POT
THAT'S AWFULLY NICE OF YOU I CAME TO SEE MR GARTH BUT COULD OPEN THE DOOR FOR MRS WHEEL WE KEEP OUR DOOR LOCKED WHEN WE'RE ALONE YOU HAS THE CHAIN ON
SURE I'LL OPEN IT FOR YOU GOT A KEY RIGHT HERE THAT WILL OPEN ANY CLOSET DOOR IN THE HOUSE SO I'LL SIT HERE AND KEEP MY WIFE COMPANY
THANK YOU ELSIE'S UPSTAIRS SHE'LL SHOW YOU THE DOOR
I HEAR MAMIE CRINGLE AND YOUR BROTHER ARE KEEPING COMPANY
JIMMY DIDN'T USED TO BOTHER MUCH WITH GIRLS. BUT HE'S BEEN SEEIN HER EVERY DAY THIS WEEK! WEDNESDAY HE GOT N AND I'M IN THE MORNING HE NEVER EVEN WENT TO BED
LOOKS TO ME LIKE YOU'LL BE ATTENDING SOON MAMIE MUST BE CROWDING FORTY HOW OLD IS YOUR BROTHER?
YES HE HAS SPEAKING OF YOUR BROTHER HE WORKS FOR THE DAILY GLOBE DOESN'T HE? I WAS JUST READING TONIGHTS PAPER LOOK AT THIS PICTURE ISN'T A CRIME-FREE KIDS THAT'S A GOOD AND THERE'S MOTHERS SICK W
THIS PAPER'S DOING A FINE THING IT SAYS HERE THEY GOT OVER A HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS COLLECTED FOR THESE POOR KIDDIES WHO CAN'T HELP BEING THAT WAY! YOU KNOW JANE IF I HAD MONEY THAT'S KIND OF CHARITY I'D LIKE TO SAVE TO
Daily Globe
NEEDY CASES RECEIVE CITY SUPPORT
HERE COMES MY HUSBAND NOW I GUESS HE JUST THAT CLOSET DOOR TAKE THE BACK A WAY JANE !!! EUREKA
MR GARTH M AWFULLY SORRY BUT I'LL HAVE TO BOTHER YOU AGAIN JUST HAPPENED TO THINK MY BROTHER HAD THAT CLOSET LOCKED ON PURPOSE
BETTER THAN THAT THERE'S THE KEY! DROP IT OFF THE NEXT TIME YOU'RE DOWN
ELSIE! IT'S ME LE ME IN, ELSIE!

Daredevil soon took top spot as Gleason hero and was given his own book in 1941 when Biro came on board. At the same time, a third book was added, *Boy. Silver Streak* lasted until 1943, when it became *Crime Does Not Pay,* one of the most important (and damaging, ultimately) new ideas in the history of comics. Gleason went on for five years with just their Big Three titles, building a huge circulation on the strength of Biro's writing and editing.

The dreaded expansion bug bit Gleason in 1948, when a second crime book, *Crime and Punishment,* a western book and, one year later, two romance books were added to the line. Overall quality began to slide about this time, and the Wertham Wars were heating up. Desperate experiments followed, tampering with the proven formats of existing books, and short-lived attempts at adding still more titles (fairy tales, a movie hero tie-in, humor and teenage stuff). In 1953 a second editor was brought in, Harold Straubing, who presumably took some of the load off Biro. Biro quit a few months before the end, as did Straubing; the last books bore the legend, "Lev Gleason, Publisher and Editor."

Since it was Gleason who started the crime comics craze, it is certain that he felt the most heat from the Wertham crusade. In mid-1948 Gleason formed the Association of Comic Magazine Publishers, which drew up the A.C.M.P. Code. Though it looked tough on paper, its provisions were universally ignored by its signatories. The Comics Code Authority arrived in late 1955, just in time to see Lev Gleason Publications go under.

The Gleason line had an unusually strong "house identity" for the time; only EC made a more elaborate effort at establishing reader identification and loyalty. One minor mystery to the Gleason operation is the role of Bob Wood. The house ads always referred to the "Gleason-Biro-Wood Line". Wood was listed in the indicia as Managing Editor; one might infer from that title that he was in charge of production and business matters. As he did not receive script or art credit in the post-Golden Age period, and as Biro was titular editor and chief writer, it seems safe to assume that Wood had little to do with the actual content of the magazines.

Biro the Writer

After two issues of *Captain Battle* (a *Silver Streak* hero), the book became *Boy* with the introduction of costumed hero Crimebuster, an orphaned teen-age crimefighter in a modified hockey uniform with cape. In the early years he spent his time fighting the Axis, most often in the person of brutish villain Iron Jaw, who was so equipped. Assorted back-feature characters—Swoop Storm, Little Dynamite, Yankee Longago, Young Robin Hood—filled out the book. In 1946, with the war over and Iron Jaw dispatched, Biro began to hit his stride as a storyteller, around issue #30. Carl Hubbell's dumpy art spoiled the impact of these stories for the first year or so until Norman Maurer took over the chief art chores. Maurer become Biro's workhorse, and was assigned to the bulk of the lead stories during the next five or six years. His semi-straight-semi-cartoony style worked perfectly for Biro's stories. Maurer worked hard, put in a lot of detail, and used his facility as cartoonist to get a lot of expressiveness into the characters. The number two artist during the period was the estimable Dan Barry, who worked in a more realistic style and could do superb action sequences. From issue #30 to about #50 Biro deemphasized the role of Crimebuster in his stories. An active participant and central character in the early tales, he was reduced to what was often a walk-on role at the end of a tale of crime, jealousy, revenge and the like, serving only to pack the survivors off to jail. Also, in many stories, he served as narrator, delivering a moral lesson to a group of kids by telling them a story. This was a favorite device of Biro's, the story-within-a-story, used frequently in *Daredevil* as well. Its use is indicative of Biro's fascination with the very nature of story-telling.

The quality of Crimebuster stories began to slip around 1950. Two factors seem to be of major importance: the expansion of the line, diluting the artist talent pool and spreading Biro too thin; and the shrinkage of page count from 68 to 52 to 48 to, finally, 32. Even though back-features were dropped, the space available for the very involved Crimebuster feature stories that Biro liked to do was steadily reduced. Also, the number of Crimebuster stories was increased from two to three, and Biro wrote them all (he always received credit on these, but there were no credits on the back-features, presumably by staff scripters). With Biro having to write the entire book, and with shorter stories, his work become less complex and more per-

TOPS
TOPS
YES, YES, OF COURSE IT'S ME WHO ELSE?
SHHH... COME IN QUICKLY!
NOW I KNOW! NOW I KNOW!
WHAT IS IT, ELSIE? IN HEAVENS NAME WHAT'S THE MATTER?
LOOK!
SAINTS BE PRAISED!
HEY! WATCH YOUR STEP BUDDY
HEY! COME BACK, YOU!
THAT DOPE IS GONNA GET HIMSELF KILLED!
WHEN THE SUCKER LEFT I STARTED TO TAKE THE CLEAN SHEETS DOWN THEN THE NEXT THING I KNEW, IT WAS RAININ' MONEY!
WELL, NOW, HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT MISER! AND US HAVING TO BEG FOR ENOUGH TO FEED US. HE'S STINGY, ALRIGHT BUT NOT WITH HIMSELF! BUT HOW COULD HE HAVE SAVED ALL THIS MONEY? THERE'RE THOUSANDS HERE!
THEN HE MUST HAVE STOLEN IT!
I'M AFRAID YOU'RE RIGHT REMEMBER WHEN JIMMY WORKED FOR MR SALTZER THE BUTCHER? HE WAS A BAD BOY. EVEN THEN I THOUGHT WHEN MR SALTZER CAME TO THE HOUSE AND BEAT HIM WITH HIS CANE IT CURED HIM FOR GOOD OH, MY GOODNESS
HERE IT IS NINE O'CLOCK! WHO DOES THAT BUM THINK HE IS? HMMM. HE'D BETTER HAVE A GOOD EXCUSE READY OR I'LL GIVE HIM A PIECE OF MY MIND. MONEY OR NO MONEY!
MAMIE!! IT'S JIMMY GARY. OH, MAMIE, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TELL YOU! HE WAS IN AN ACCIDENT! HE WAS A RUN OVER RIGHT HERE ON THE CORNER! THEY TOOK HIM TO DOVER HOSPITAL.
GOOD HEAVENS, SANDRA—IS HE HURT BAD? HOW DID IT HAPPEN?
HMM DID I EVER GET THE EYE FROM THAT SHIRT GEE...LOOK AT 7.95! ALL CAPE I WORE SUITS BEFORE. BUT THIS ONE COST NINETY-FIVE BUCKS! MAYBE THEY CAN'T SEE QUALITY, BUT THEY CAN FEEL IT UNCONSCIOUSLY!
FUNNY HOW MAMIE NEVER GOT HITCHED. HER MOTHERS WORKING, SO THAT'S NO PROBLEM. SHE'D BE BEAUTIFUL IF MAYBE SHE'LL TAKE SOME PILLS AN' REDUCE. PARDON ME
HEY!
REDUCE? NAA. THEN SHE'D GET PLAYIN ABOUNCE AGAIN THE WAY THE GUYS USED TO WOLF HER ALL THE TIME! SORRY—WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEING FAT? AS LONG AS I KNOW SHE'S A LOOKER BY NATURE OOPS. PARDON ME!
THEY HAD TO PUT HIM ON A STRETCHER. THERE'S STILL BLOOD ON THE STREET WHERE HE GOT HIT. COME I'LL SHOW YOU!!
I DON'T WANT TO SEE HIS BLOOD. LOOK, SANDRA, MY MOTHER ISN'T FEELING WELL. I HATE TO LEAVE HER ALONE WILL YOU STAY WITH HER FOR AWHILE. I'LL BE A GOOD PAL? I WANT TO GO OVER TO THE HOSPITAL.
SURE THING, MAMIE. ISN'T IT A SHAME, JUST WHEN YOU AN HIM WAS GETTIN' SO WELL ACQUAINTED? MAMIE, I DON'T WANT TO SOUND MERCENARY. BUT HE MIGHT DIE! FATHER DALY HAD TO GIVE HIM HIS LAST RITES DOWN IN THE GUTTER, AND IF HE'S CRAZY ABOUT YOU, LIKE YOU WERE SAYIN', MAYBE HE'LL LEAVE YOU ALL THAT MONEY HE SHOWED YOU!
SANDRA, YOU LOUSE! TALK'N LIKE THAT WITH THE POOR BOY DYIN'! BES DES. IT WAS ONLY A FEW HUNDRED BUCKS SEE YOU LATER
MAYBE HE AIN'T REALLY HURT BAD. MAYBE SANDRA WAS EXAGGERATING. IN THAT CASE, HE MIGHT LIKE SOMETHIN TO READ WHILE HE'S RESTIN UP IN THE HOSPITAL.

functory. The stories took a real nosedive in quality with issue #60, when for no discernable reason, Iron Jaw was resurrected to serve as continuing villain, set to battling Crimebuster in three routine stories per issue, done cliffhanger style (strangely, Iron Jaw had been working as a *comic* heavy in the "Sniffer" filler stories just prior to his revival as full-dress baddie). At about the same time, Maurer and Barry lost their exclusive artists' slot, and less talented hands went to work on the book, William Overgard and "Al Borth" (Al Wenzel) among them. Maurer soon left Gleason to work with Joe Kubert at St. John, Barry went over to DC. Maurer returned later, though (after St. John folded), and worked sporadically until the end.

The Iron Jaw experiment was killed a year later, but the book continued to go downhill. Occasionally, Biro would turn out an interesting story reminiscent of his prime period, but he had too little space and the wrong artists. The story-within-a-story gambit was dropped, and Crimebuster went back to routine crime-fighting chores. In the last couple of years, in response to the anti-crime furore, Crimebuster reverted to his original name of Chuck Chandler, and he was installed as a student at Curtiss Academy, where he played in a series of bland Frank Merriwell tales, winning track meets and taming bullies. The art picked up at the end with the addition of Joe Kubert to the staff (he came along with buddy Maurer), but there is little else to recommend those final issues.

Daredevil is much the same as *Boy*. The books followed a parallel course throughout, with the same prime period for Biro—1946-1950. Daredevil's career as crimefighter was much the same as Crimebuster's. His chief recurrent nemesis carrying through from Golden Age days was The Claw, a giant fanged alien with world-conquering notions. The Claw hung on until #31, but the book began to shift in character much earlier with the introduction of the Little Wise Guys, a kid quartet, in #13. The Wise Guys gradually stole the limelight from Daredevil (and costumed heroes were on the wane anyhow). With the Claw out of the way, Biro turned to the long and complex tales he loved, with the Wise Guys as chief protagonists. Daredevil was gradually reduced to round-'em-up walk-ons, and to tale-telling narrator. It was with Daredevil in this latter role that Biro told his longest and most memorable story, the "Petey Davis" tale in *Daredevil* #50, about which more later.

Daredevil hung on for another year as decline came in 1950 with expansion and book shrinkage. He was shuffled off with #69 and the Wise Guys took over the book entirely. Again, it was Maurer and Barry who carried the art load through the prime period. With decline the Wise Guys stories ceased to be the compelling action-adventure yarns of the great days; the kids began to take on a Bowery Boys taint, comic relief was laid on with a trowel, they had too many run-ins with haunted houses and spoiled rich brats. Maurer and Barry left. Borth, DiPreta and Kida carried most of the art load to the last.

Biro was always prominently credited for writing *Boy* and *Daredevil;* but *Crime Does Not Pay* and *Crime and Punishment* never had script credits during the prime period. Before a sudden quantum jump in quality with issue #49 of *Crime Does Not Pay,* a year after *Boy* and *Daredevil* began to hit their stride, the book featured breathtakingly bad art by Rudy Palais, Bob Q. Siege, Alan Mandel and Jack Alderman. The scripts were ludicrous and simple-minded, some credited to Dick Wood. One can imagine Biro, once satisfied that his pet books *Boy* and *Daredevil* were on the right track, turning to cleaning house in the crime department. The old artists vanished *en masse,* replaced by slick stylists George Tuska (the premier crime comics artist), Dan Barry, Fred Kida and Bob Fujitani (B. Fuje). The scripts were likewise upgraded. Suddenly the lead stories were twice as long, three times as complex, and had four times the lettering. Despite the absence of credit, it seems likely that Biro did write the *Crime Does Not Pay* lead stories; he may have relinquished the crime scripting chores later, after he had established a style for others to follow. As they are "true crime" stuff, with plots lifted from true detective mags, it's impossible to discern Biro's hand, insofar as the storylines are concerned. The dialogue, however, does have the Biro touch, at least through the prime crime period of 1947-1952. The decline of *Crime Does Not Pay* was postponed past that of *Boy* and *Daredevil* thanks to the introduction of Chip Gardner, greatest of the comic book hard-boiled dicks. Because of the limited scope of the crime stories, the *Crime Does Not Pay* and *Crime and Punishment* writing is much

TOPS
TOPS
THEY JUST BROUGHT HIM OUT OF THE OPERATING ROOM HIS CONDITION IS STILL CRITICAL
DO YOU KNOW IF HE WROTE ANYTHING? I MEAN A NOTE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?
HIS ARMS WERE BADLY INJURED THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOSSIBLE
WELL HE MIGHT HAVE HE COULD'VE DICTATED IT TO A NURSE!
MY DEAR MONICA! I WOULDN'T KNOW I'M NOT THE NURSE! I'LL SEE IF I CAN'T FIND OUT
YOU POOR DARLING SO THAT'S WHAT YOU WANTED TO ASK ME
MAYBE YOU WOULDN'T WANT ME NOW LIKE THIS!
WHY JIMMY, WITH ALL YOUR MONEY IT WON'T MATTER SO MUCH! YOU'LL BE ABLE TO HAVE A SERVANT TO HELP YOU
A SERVANT! I'LL HAVE A MAID TO LIGHT MY CIGARETTES AND A CHAUFFEUR TO DO MY DRIVING AND A WHAT ARE YOU SNEERING FOR? DON'T YOU BELIEVE ME?
OF COURSE I BELIEVE YOU—BUT A HANDFUL OF HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS CAN'T GET YOU A STAFF OF SERVANTS
NO, BUT FIFTEEN THOUSAND BUCKS WILL ESPECIALLY IN SOME PLACE LIKE MEXICO! WE CAN LIVE LIKE KINGS THERE ON TWENTY A WEEK!
THAT EMERGENCY CASE JIM GARY WAS A TOUGH ONE! WE WORKED ON HIM FOR TWO HOURS. IT LOOKS AS IF HE'LL LIVE BUT HIS ARMS WERE SO BADLY INJURED THERE ISN'T A CHANCE IN A MILLION HE'LL EVER USE THEM AGAIN—PARALYSIS
SAY, THAT'S MY FIANCEE STANDING OVER THERE. GRAB HER DOCTOR! SHE'S GOING TO FAINT
YOU STARTED TALKING BEFORE I HAD A CHANCE TO WARN YOU. I'LL GET SOME WATER FOR HER
I WAS A TOUGH WAY TO BREAK IT BUT SHE'D HAVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH SOONER OR LATER
HE'LL BE A CRIPPLE WHO WANTS TO PLAY NURSEMAID TO A CRIPPLE— ESPECIALLY A MAN WHO LET OUT OF HERE RIGHT NOW THAT'LL BE THE END OF WHAT ABOUT THE MONEY?
HERE, DRINK THIS DOWN. YOUR FRIEND IS GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT AS SOON AS WE MAKE SURE THE NURSE TAKE YOU TO SEE HIM
ARMS ARE REALLY PARALYZED WON'T BE EVER BE ABLE TO USE THEM AGAIN
NOW DARLING YOU WON'T NEED A MAID WITH ME AROUND. NOBODY'S LOOKIN AFTER YOU BUT YOUR MAMIE. OH THERE'S THE NURSE SNARLING FOR ME TO LEAVE
DARN IT!
HERE—I NEARLY FORGOT! I BROUGHT YOU THE PAPER! RAISE YOUR KNEES A LITTLE AND I'LL DROP IT IN FRONT OF YOU. LIKE THIS. TAKE IT EASY NOW SWEETIE AND I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW
FIFTEEN THOUSAND!
AAIEEEEEEE
THERE'S A SLIM CHANCE OF HIS GETTING A LITTLE CONTROL BACK. YOU SHOULD BE THANKFUL HE'S STILL ALIVE HE GAVE US A BAD TIME. WE ALMOST LOST HIM!
YES OF COURSE I SHOULD BE THANKFUL
I CAN GO IN TO SEE HIM ANYHOW I DON'T HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER TO STAY WITH HIM OR NOT I CAN WAIT UNTIL I FIND OUT!
YOU MAY SEE YOUR FRIEND NOW FOR ONLY ONE MINUTE PLEASE
HELLO, JIMMY!
I WAS SO YOU SO I HAD CAN'T SEEM TO ABOUT HOW DO IT MATTER!
I WAS TO ASK YOU TO MARRY ME
THAT SCREAM CAME FROM A THAT'S YOUR HARDY TRUE
SOMEBODY CALL DOCTOR CHASE TO THE NEW PATIENT
FIFTEEN THOUSAND! OH BOY!
HE'S ASLEEP I CAN'T HIM SOMETHING TO QUIET HIS NERVES
HE SURE KICKED THESE PAPERS AROUND NOW WHERE IS THE FIRST PAGE? OH HERE IT IS
LISTEN TO THIS: "MYSTERY TWINS GIVE FIFTEEN G'S TO FUND!" A.M. P.M. YESTERDAY TWO ELDERLY LADIES WHO REFUSED TO DIVULGE THEIR NAMES DONATED FIFTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS IN CASH TO THE NEEDY CASES FUND
YOU KNOW TILLIE, I'D LIKE TO SEND THIS POOR JOE'S NAME TO THAT PAPER. HE'S GOING TO NEED LOTS OF CHARITY
Daily Globe
MYSTERY TWINS GIVE FIFTEEN G'S TO FUND
The End

less interesting with regard to Biro's particular storytelling gifts, so the crime books will not be discussed further here, despite the fact that Biro probably had a hand in writing them, and certainly influenced their character as editor.

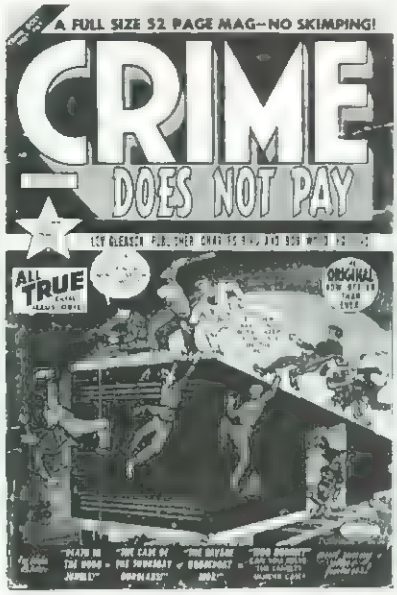
The other Gleason titles, *Desperado, Black Diamond, boy Meets Girl, Buster Crabbe*, etc., are of slight interest, with two exceptions. *Tops* was a short-lived attempt to produce a *Life*-size comic book for an adult market. The Biro lead story in #2 is a rather ordinary tale, a "suspense" story about a hat-check girl menaced by a strangler. It is, in fact, a good deal less "adult" in approach than many of the stories in *Boy* and *Daredevil*.

Uncle Charlie's Fables, targeted to the other end of the age spectrum, consisted of pleasant enough old-style fairy stories, with wicked stepmothers, prince charmings, giants and such, all written by Biro for a very young audience. Not much here to interest Biro fans, though it's amusing to imagine Biro at the typewriter, rolling out the last page of "Spike Spitz: A Killer Who Went Straight—To The Chair!" and rolling in page one of "Janice and the Lazy Giant".

Tale Within a Tale

Like virtually all "straight" comic book stories, most popular literature and a goodly portion of classic literature, Biro's stories are concerned with crime (Wertham *was* right there). The earlier stories in *Boy* and *Daredevil* were B-movieish crime melodramas with a decidedly adult slant. Murder, theft, drinking, gambling, even infidelity were the themes of stories played out by adult actors. The juvenile leads, Crimebuster and the Wise Guys, would seem rather out of place in such stories, so Biro usually kept them offstage until the wind-up, moving them along less rousing parallel plotlines, or employing them as narrator or audience in the tale-within-a-tale format (in one odd variant, the Wise Guys were cast as kid actors in a *Dead End*-type movie; the showing of the film served as the inner tale).

"Trouble Is Cheap" in *Boy* #32 is typical of Biro's work in this period. Two no-goods named Lou and Ken flunk out of college, get drunk, and ride the rails to the country, where they take jobs at a lumber camp. One of them gets cozy with Marie, the camp chief's slutish wife; she stabs her husband when he learns she plans to run off with them. This scenario unwinds for nearly half the length of the story before Crimebuster turns up to investigate the murder. Marie and Ken turn on Lou and accuse him of the killing. He is convicted, hung, and pronounced dead; but he miraculously revives. Marie and Ken hear the news that Lou has beaten the hangman and they flee. Two years pass, and Crimebuster is called in by a doctor to investigate the case of a man who turns up every few weeks in his office, savagely beaten. Crimebuster learns that it is Ken, shockingly aged. He tells that Lou has found him, and that he periodically exacts revenge by beating him up. Ken is a physical and mental wreck. Crimebuster watches Ken's apartment and sees that he only imagines that he is visited by the man he betrayed; he beats himself out of guilt. Lou



Norman Rockwell's ***Crime Does Not Pay*** *Cover: At bottom, there's a backroom rehearsal in Rockwell's oil painting,* ***Shuffleton's Barber Shop,*** *first published as an April 29, 1950,* ***Saturday Evening Post*** *cover. Note magazine rack in foreground. Photograph (left), taken under Rockwell's supervision for use as reference, included* ***Cosmopolitan, Crime Does Not Pay*** *#82,* ***Walt Disney's Comics and Stories, Gabby Hayes, Famous Crimes*** *and* ***Wild Bill Hickok*** *#2. Detail from painting (right) shows that Rockwell, in painting his version of* ***Crime Does Not Pay,*** *retained the colors and design but retitled it* ***Rihe.***

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survived the hanging by only two hours; Marie was killed in a fall when she tried to hop a train.

Not a terribly original story—a familiar triangle, some psychological elements, a bit of obvious irony. But what sets it apart from run-of-the-mill crime dramas in comic books is that it's concerned with character and that the events occur as a consequence of character strengths and weaknesses. The ordinary comic scripter sets out a succession of exciting, suspenseful, or surprising scenes and then puts a crew of stock characters over the jumps of the patched-together plot. His main objective is to get those set pieces with audience appeal on center stage and show off the stars of the book. But in every important Biro story the tale is set in motion by a character with a tragic flaw: pride, greed, envy, lust, whatever. His starting point is that character, and the story unfolds naturally from that. This is, of course, the approach usually taken by "serious" writers.

Even more novel, for comics, is Biro's consistent slighting of the books' stars. Biro operated a "dramatic anthology" series, treating his star characters as secondary pegs on which to hang a story with wholly new actors, locales and themes. In the typical book with continuing lead character, the storyline revolves around the lead and is designed to showcase him. When Biro moved the hero out of the action entirely to serve as narrator, he had comics much like EC's *Impact* and *Shock SuspenStories*—except that he had more space to tell his tales, and much more variety in story ideas. Straight "drama comics" were flops for EC and others (Atlas tried an obvious *Boy* imitation titled *Young Men!*) The formula worked for Biro because he had genuinely interesting plots and characters.

Later on in the 1946-50 period the emphasis turned from adult crime to juvenile crime, and then to kid action-adventure stories—usually with some criminous goings-on to serve as plot hook, but that being a minor feature. The juvenile delinquent stories were no doubt prompted by the comics-create-young-criminals hue and cry swirling about the industry at the time. Biro, I think, felt that he could meet the issue head on by doing stories in which the "crime does not pay" lesson was forcefully taught. One could cynically conclude that this was mere public relations (certainly the endless parade of letters from Boy Scout leaders and teachers touting the moral uplift qualities of Gleason mags was), but I'm convinced Biro was sincere in these stories. And they were easy to do since he already had juvenile heroes on hand.

It is the kids' action-adventure stories that I find most intriguing, though, for in these Biro drew upon antecedents that have been used in comic books with surprising infrequency. The superhero has dominated adventure comics for kids, of course, and the superhero genre had its origins in the hero pulps, quickly tacking on new rules and conventions that still set the tone today. Biro, moving out of the straight crime melodramas into milder subject matter, reached back beyond the pulps and dusted off the old boys' adventure series like the Rover Boys, Aeroplane Boys, Hardy Boys and Tom Swift. The same themes that dominated the old kid books reappear in the later Biro stories: the romance of aviation (a particular pet—Biro was a pilot), science and inventions, sports, treasure hunts, cars, hiking and exploring, journey to exotic lands, our gang vs. their gang. These themes also appeared in other hero titles, certainly—after all, they are proven kid-pleasers—but they were always subordinate to the superheroics. For Biro, they were the main matter. These themes were the mainstay of the Big Two throughout the decline and right on to the end, but much diluted in quality for reasons mentioned earlier. But for the last two years or so of the prime period, Biro did a superb job of capturing the spirit of the classic boys' adventure yarns. Because of the long shadow cast by Superman and his offspring, this approach was seldom tried in comic books; and the few scattered stabs at it that occur to me *(The Dover Boys, Frank Merriwell)* were short-lived. Carl Barks, working in a very different area, made use of the same elements with great success, particularly treasure hunt and exotic locale themes. But only Biro made it work in a straight format.

The rise of the kid adventure stories in Biro's work seemingly marks the end of his notion that he could build and hold an adult audience. In the first two years of the prime period, between the Golden Age superheroics and the juvenile delinquent/juvenile adventure stories, he clearly made a bid for an adult readership with his crime dramas. The combined *adult* circulation figures said that audience was there; thus the *Tops* experiment. *Tops* failed, and Biro turned away from that incipient adult market and stuck with the proven customers. Besides, the adults were getting hostile about comics, the industry was in turmoil. It was no time for radical experimentation with formats and markets. I'm sure Biro's instincts told him that, and certainly Gleason's business head ordered it.

Talking Heads

Much has been said about the concept of *graphic storytelling*—the way that art, dialogue and caption are intertwined to move the plot from panel to panel, from page to page; to delineate character and bring out motivation and all the rest of it. As one given to vociferous complaint about wordiness in comic book writing, I'm forced to back up a bit in discussing Biro's graphic storytelling technique.

Biro was wordy. *Very* wordy. Inspect a page of prime period Biro at random and you are certain to find huge balloons, sometimes coming close to crowding the speaker out of the panel. Letterers for Gleason were paid a premium page rate. However, there is a valid justification for Biro's wordiness. In the main, those words were essential to the telling of the story. Biro told rich, complex stories, packed with subplots, information, motivation, three-dimensional characters built up from nothing for a particular yarn. All this and, likely as not, a moral lesson to get across. Because Biro was determined to get those elaborate tales he had in his head out to his audience, he was forced to use a lot of text. It's easy to be put off by the preponderance of "talking head" panels, but, dammit, those heads are saying something! They are imparting plot or background information and bringing out important aspects of character. Biro was primarily concerned with characterization and ideas; difficult to do in pantomime, certainly not economically. The payoff to wading through all those bloated balloons is that, having finished a 16 page Biro story, you've enjoyed a tale with more meat in it than any Marvel four-parter at 17 pages per part. The Petey Davis story ran 35 pages; were it to be expanded to fit current storytelling conventions it would certainly take on the dimensions of a bona fide graphic novel. Lots of words, yes; but very little hot air.

There's plenty of text in a Biro story, but you'll have to search high and low to find any of it in captions. Biro clearly disliked captions (and thought balloons), those plagues of current comic book writing. Every Biro story would have his introductory remarks in a box in the splash, but apart from that there would be no captions, save for an occasional "Later" or "Meanwhile" or "talking narrator's head" in the story-within-a-story. People observing real life aren't tuned in to disembodied voices that tell them what's what (tv commercials are not real life). You figure things out by seeing and hearing—in comics, looking at the drawings and reading the dialogue (and sound effects). Biro was a master at transitions without resorting to caption to explain things. A typical Biro story would start out with parallel plots—one involving the main dramatic protagonists of the tale, the other involving Crimebuster or the Wise Guys—whose subplot would merge with the main action later on. Biro would simply move the scene from group 1 to group 2 in the space between the two panels. As the talk proceeds, he would gradually bring out, in a natural, unforced way, all the information you need to enjoy and understand the story; who the new people are, where they are, why they're doing and saying what they are doing and saying, what sort of people they are. All done with dialogue, and with the art. What was patently obvious in the drawing certainly didn't require superfluous restatement in caption; or in dialogue, for that matter. Biro, an artist as well as a writer, knew what could

Biro handled the same dramatic situation two different ways on this cover of **Daredevil** *#50 (September, 1948) and page two of the same issue On the following pages, other excerpts from this story (pages five, six, nineteen and twenty) show Biro's contrasts between "Petey one" and "Petey two."*

THE COMIC MAGAZINE THAT DARED TO BE DIFFERENT!
SEPT.
NO. 50
DAREDEVIL
10¢ The Greatest in Comics
COMPLETE DAREDEVIL STORIES
LEV GLEASON, PUB. CHARLES BIRO AND BOB WOOD, EDITORS
GANGWAY! HERE I COME!
ATTABOY PEE WEE - GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE GOT!
I CAN'T! HEY- WHAT DO I DO NOW? I'M GOIN' BACKWARDS!
HANG ON, PEE WEE!
CHARLES BIRO
MY PALS MAY HOLD THE LIGHT HERE!
SURE! BUT AREN'T YOU COMIN' DOWN?
THAT'S THE HEIGHT OF SOMETHING OR OTHER, BUT WHAT DOES IT PROVE?
MAYBE A NEW WORLD'S RECORD- THAT'S WHAT!
I DON'T KNOW WHO'S NUTTIER - YOU OR SCARECROW!
IT ALL DEPENDS ON HOW YOU LOOK AT IT! WHAT'S THE NEXT EVENT?

GANGWAY! HERE I COME!
OKAY, PEE WEE, JUST REMEMBER, IT'S SPEED AND A GOOD START THAT COUNTS!
ATTABOY PEE WEE - GIVE IT ALL YOU GOT!
YOU'LL HANG IF YOU DON'T GET YOUR FEET UP!
I CAN'T- IT'S CAUGHT BETWEEN MY LEGS
HEY - WHAT DO I DO NOW? I'M GOIN' BACKWARDS!
HA, HA, HA! WHATEVER GOES UP MUST COME DOWN EH PEE WEE?
PLOP
WHAT'S SO FUNNY? I'LL SHOW YOU! HEY, I MEAN SCARECROW, ARE YOU MY PAL?
HERE PEE WEE WHAT IS IT?
HA HA
HEY, WHAT GIVES?
MAYBE A NEW WORLD'S RECORD, THAT'S WHAT!
THAT'S THE HEIGHT OF SOMETHING OR OTHER!

and could not be done with each element and he exercised tight control over his artists to see to it that the art conveyed the information and moods that were suited to it. Alex Toth, talking about Biro in an interview (*Graphic Story Magazine* #10), recalls that Biro laid down hard and fast rules for his artists: "I don't want blacks. Black is cheating. Forget it. I want to see everything." and, "I want people to *look* at each other when they're talking." Perhaps petty, dogmatic; but Biro made certain his artists drew to conform with his notions of how art should complement text and advance the story. He was in control of both elements and conscious of their interplay—instinctively a graphic storyteller in the modern sense.

Biro's ability to make captionless transitions and bring out information in dialogue is the technique of a skillful *radio* writer. The better radio scripters were old hands at that, as it was considered bad form to use the disembodied narrator's voice or character's "thoughts" when cannily constructed dialogue could do the same job. It is quite possible that Biro was influenced by radio drama in much the same way that Eisner was influenced by the movies. There is an undeniable aspect of unreality to this approach; if closely inspected you can't help but conclude that people would not say all those conveniently informative things in real life. It is artifice, a dramatic convention. But when handled properly, worked into a story that moves along briskly and holds your interest in theme and character, you don't notice the artifice. Biro had the gifts to bring this off successfully.

Biro's writing was not without flaw. He had his share of stock secondary characters and stock situations. He used a lot of "gosh-wow" kids' slang that seems a bit silly nowadays. He sometimes tried to pack *too* much dialogue into a given space and the pacing of the story would suffer as a consequence. He had to work within page limitations, and occasionally undertook to tell more story than he could comfortably handle. There is gratuitous action in some stories and not enough in others. He felt compelled to insert the inevitable comic relief bits into the dramas (Crimebuster had that damned monkey; Scarecrow and Pee Wee did their respective dumb and feisty numbers too often), though during the prime period he kept those bits segregated from the dramatic action, reserving them to the opening and windup. *Deus ex machina* and coincidence were trotted out often enough to keep the plot wheels spinning. These familiar writer's devices have served serious writers as well as hacks, to good effect as well as bad. It's a matter of not leaning too heavily on these tricks. During the 1946-50 period Biro consistently managed not to overuse the gimmicks, short cuts and cop-outs. They could be easily forgiven if spotted in a story that held your interest and entertained you; and very often the story moved along so smoothly and compellingly that you simply were never aware of them. The gifted storyteller, like Biro, has the ability to draw you into the tale; when that happens all the mechanisms vanish.

The most off-putting feature of Biro's writing to the modern reader is his relentless use of the "moral lesson." He was as much concerned with setting forth "right is right and wrong is wrong" statements, in his way, as is Steve Ditko in *Mr. A* and *The Avenging World*. The adult crime and juvenile delinquent dramas are indeed "message stories", as stern and unyielding in their commitment to the Judeo-Christian ethic as a medieval morality play. In simpler times, Biro worked with simple moral themes: honor, uprightness, respect for others, commitment to personal values. Though he didn't disguise his intention to put across a moral, he didn't beat you about the head with it. He made certain that, above all, the story would entertain, delight, and hold the reader in suspense; he went about his business of tale-spinning and worked his lesson into the tale. You couldn't say he was subtle about it, but he never assumed the air of a priggish Sunday school teacher either. He never let the tale fall apart by becoming overzealous in putting across his message. Which, of course, is what is wrong with Ditko's work and much Marvel "relevance."

Biro's moral tales are dramas based on character, and the central figures are, in most cases, believable. He could impart a feeling of life to his protagonists, and they did what they did for reasons. They had

GEE, UNCLE CHARLIE, PLEASE TELL US A STORY! I'D LIKE ONE ABOUT A POOR BOY WHO BECOMES KNIGHTED OR SOMETHING!
AW, PLEASE TELL ONE ABOUT A BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS!
NO! TELL ONE ABOUT A GIANT!
I GUESS THE ONLY WAY I CAN SATISFY ALL OF YOU IS TO TELL FOUR STORIES—ONE FOR EACH! WELL, ONCE UPON A TIME...

Unmask Daredevil and you find Biro. In above posed photograph (from **Uncle Charlie's Fables** *#1, 1952) kids sprawled on grass listen as storyteller Biro devises a story for each taste. In panels below, Little Wise Guys on grass listen as narrator Daredevil outlines different "Petey" variations.*

depth. He didn't trot out stereotyped white hats and black hats and put them through predictable routines. Sure, he used stereotypes for secondary characters to advance the plot, he sometimes overstated his case. But more often in the prime period, his main characters had *life* to them; you could believe there were people like that. His use of the "tragic flaw" motif gave his morality plays, in their modest comic book way, the impact and power and feel of awful inevitability of Greek drama and Shakespearean tragedy. I don't want to overstate. This is Uncle Charlie Biro, not the Bard of Avon; comic book tales, not literary Art. But the parallels are there.

Finally, I believe Biro was sincere in his self-assumed role as teacher of ethics to his young readers. Certainly there was no then-current vogue for "uplift" in comics. Biro was writing his cautionary tales well before the Wertham business got going. It is ironic, and paradoxical, that while Wertham was attacking the amoral and sensational tone of the crime comic (a Biro invention—the most influential example of which he edited and perhaps wrote for) Biro was at the same time writing stories in *Boy* and *Daredevil* that were genuinely moral in tone and pedagogical in intent. And because Biro was a skillful storyteller, his moral fables powerful and obviously sincere, one must conclude that he *did* have a positive effect on some of his readership, even discounting the paid testimonials to that effect in the letter columns. (The Gleason crime mags made similar claims, but those I can never believe. Perfunctory obeisance was paid to the same

Ideals, so thoroughly buried in all the blood and guts sensationalism that it might just as well have been dispensed with altogether.)

Was Biro driven to his juvenile delinquent cycle because of subconscious guilt feeling about what he was "doing to" his young readers in *Crime Does Not Pay* and *Crime and Punishment*? Did the juvenile crime and punishment tales take center stage in *Boy* and *Daredevil* because he wanted to provide a counter force to the amoral tone of the crime books? I really couldn't say; it's certainly within the realm of possibility. But that's of little consequence; what counts, as ever, is the story, and Biro's delinquency tales were every bit as good as his adult crime stories. One of those represents Biro at his peak, "Petey Davis."

This story in *Daredevil* #50, September, 1948, is perhaps the best he ever wrote—a story in which all the elements of the Biro style are in evidence, and in which all those elements gel perfectly. It was also the longest story Biro ever did (35 pages, typically 9 panels per page), and the one that garnered the biggest response in letters from the readers. A special page was set aside for the letters of praise: "NEVER BEFORE...In the history of illustories has the acclaim for a single story been so overwhelming! This response definitely establishes illustories as a great literary medium!" ("Illustories", was a term coined by Biro and used prominently throughout the Gleason line). Even when you discount the puffery and PR, it's clear the story did have a real impact on readership.

"Petey Davis" takes the form of the tale-within-a-tale that Biro liked so much. The Wise Guys are messing around at track practice, dreaming about trying out for the upcoming Olympics. The guys are kidding Scarecrow about his fantasies of becoming a star athlete when Daredevil happens by and chides them for discouraging him. Daredevil says, "It's a tragedy when a person either *doesn't* use his talent at all, or else *misuses* it! In my opinion, his chances of achievement depend on the individual's character and the direction he chooses to follow in life! It would be interesting to demonstrate what I mean by taking an imaginary boy and telling two stories about him—one where he *misdirects* his ability and the other where he uses it to everyone's best advantage!" Daredevil proceeds to tell the parallel tales. Biro has explicitly stated his intention to teach a moral lesson by telling a story about character.

Petey Davis #1 leads off for the negative. He has a good home and loving parents, but he lacks character (in his delinquent stories Biro sometimes employed the broken home-poor environment theme, at other times the "bad seed" theory). He swipes money from his mother's purse, shoots craps, cuts classes. He swipes a wad of money from a crap game winner and runs off so swiftly that the fellow can't come close to catching him. This gives Petey #1 the idea of employing his fleet-footedness to steal on a regular basis. He steals a trophy cup from a high school track star; Petey easily outruns him, but is identified at school the next day and expelled. On the streets, he discusses his plans with a poolhall character and hanger-on, Stupe Morton. After another trial run (swiping a bunch of bananas from a fruit stand), he's ready for a big job. He loiters around an uptown store, and when a customer pulls out a fat wallet Petey grabs it and takes off. He gets away clean, but Stupe is spotted watching across the street. The cops collar him, put the pressure on until he breaks down and reveals where he was to meet Petey. The cop confronts Petey in the coal cellar hideout, but he breaks free and takes off. The cop fires three warning shots, then fires at Petey, trying to hit him in the legs. The shot is high, and Petey #1 is killed. *Daredevil* breaks in at this point, noting, "The distance Petey ran before being brought down was exactly one hundred yards—and his time—9.4 seconds—equalled the world's record!" The cop in the panel below points at Petey's worn shoes, "And look at the shoes he was wearing! It's a miracle he could run at all! Poor lad! Even though he *was* a crook and probably got what he asked for, I can't help feeling sorry for him! He'd still have his whole life ahead of him, if he'd stayed on the right side of the law!"

Nineteen pages into the story, after a short break, Daredevil resumes. Petey #2 looks the same as Petey #1, has the same home and friends, but also has the character that Petey #1 lacked. Petey #2 is considerate to his parents, works a part-time job to help with home expenses. This Petey's major interest is track. He practices tirelessly, eschews late hours, doesn't drink or smoke. he runs in a series of track meets. He betters his mark in

THANKS PETEY, BUT I HAVE TO COLLECT ON THE BILL IT'S $6.30
OUR STORY OPENS EXACTLY AS DID FIRST ONE DID
SURE MOM'S HOME, ONLY WHY DON'T YOU LET ME TAKE IT? I'LL SAVE YOU A CLIMB!
THAT'S SWELL OF YOU, PETEY THANKS
THAT DAVIS BOY SURE IS A FINE, DUTIFUL LAD! HE'S PAID THE LAUNDRY BILL FOR HIS MOTHER AND HE'S TAKING THE LAUNDRY UP FOR ME TO SAVE ME THE CLIMB!
IT'S NOT AS IF HE GETS HIS DOUGH EASY. THE KID WORKS FOR PAPA'S DELICATESSEN, DELIVERS ORDERS AFTER SCHOOL EVERY DAY. I HOPE MY KID GROWS UP TO BE AS NICE AS HE IS!
WHO'S THERE?
KNOCK KNOCK
THE LAUNDRY MAN!
PETEY, YOU'RE NOT FOOLING! YOU DO HAVE THE LAUNDRY BILL! I MEANT TO PAY THE BILL THIS WEEK.
IT'S ALL TAKEN CARE OF, MOM! I PAID HIM MYSELF $6.30
OH PETEY, YOU MUSTN'T DO THAT! HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU, THE MONEY YOU EARN IN YOUR OWN LET ME PAY YOU BACK!

each one, eventually equalling the world record for the 100 yard dash. He becomes a local celebrity, is elected president of the student body. He pals around with the same Stupe Morton as in the first story; but here, by the example of Petey's success and happiness (and not by any lecturing on Petey's part), Stupe begins to have second thoughts about his carefree life as a poolhall wastrel. Imbued with a new sense of self-worth, Stupe determines to reject his old ways and make something of himself. In the climactic scene, Petey runs one more race—with Stupe watching from the bench, happily installed as new track team manager—and breaks the world's record by one-tenth of a second. Petey is acclaimed as the future star of the next Olympics. Daredevil closes out the story: "It's ironic—a gunshot started the race which marked the beginning of a great career for the second Petey—just as a gunshot ended the career of Petey number one! And that difference of a tenth of a second between Petey one and Petey two's hundred-yard dashes was a pair of *shoes*—they *both* had the *same* opportunities, but *not* the same character!"

"Petey Davis" may seem rather corny and obvious. This bald plot summary gives no hint of the depth of characterization, the interplay of the characters, the detail, the true ring of the dialogue, the suspense that Biro built for a shooting or a track meet. It's a *wonderful* story, illustrated with care and good graphic storytelling sense by Norm Maurer. There are really two moral lessons in the story. The "good men are rewarded/ bad men come to bad ends" theme is explicitly noted. On another level, there is the more subtle tale of "the redemption of Stupe Morton". The characters of Peteys 1 and 2 are different and fixed in each story, but Stupe is essentially the same person in both; it is the character of his friend that determines his fate. The moment of Stupe's reform, talking to two pool sharpies named Duke and Ace, then showing up at the meet and giving a pep talk to one of the guys on the bench, is the most beautifully crafted sequence in the story.

Yarnspinner Biro

I don't want to leave the impression that I consider Charles Biro to be a Great Writer, or even one of the front-rank capital A Artist graphic storytellers. Had Biro left comics to pursue a career as a writer, I think he might have become a competent journeyman tv/ movie scriptwriter, or a successful but not critically acclaimed popular fiction writer. But Biro was not a real innovator in the form, as was, say, Eisner. He was, rather, a craftsman who made the best use of techniques already in place—augmented by inspired borrowing of themes and approaches from other areas of literature and drama. He is an important figure in comic book history, but he was not a path-breaker and he left no heirs, as have Kirby, Eisner, Caniff, Raymond and many others. In that respect he is like Barks—*sui generis*.

What makes his comic book work so valuable—as fun reading, even 30 some years later, and as an instructive lesson to current comics scribes—is that his primary object was to spin yarns, and not simply to produce pulpwood paper goods for sale to kids. That he enjoyed his work—cooking up exciting plot ideas, creating interesting and plausible character, and, yes, teaching his little moral lessons—is obvious when you read a Biro story. That self-evident joy in storytelling is an all too rare characteristic in comic book writing, as was Biro's exceptional skill in doing it. □

Portrait sketch of Biro (artist unknown) from the 1-page text "Meet Charles Biro" in **Daredevil** *#12, 1942.*

THE REALIZATION OF A DREAM...

AFTER ***nine years of planning and of research, we present a new concept in magazine publishing—TOPS. It is the logical result, the normal evolution, the climax of the advance of the comic strip. The enormous interest of the American public in comics, the refinement of its art, style and technique, made possible the creation of this magazine.***

This new means of entertainment, for which we have coined the descriptive word, Illustories, now takes its place in full maturity alongside the theatre, movies, radio and television. It is not unlike the dramatic arts; its contact is both visual and literary.

Each issue of TOPS will include more than 600 hand-rendered illustrations into which the artists and writers will have poured their best creative talents. This new visual journalism is as American as hot-dogs and chewing gum. In our busy way of life, millions who love to read find too little time to do so. TOPS, realizing that "a picture is worth a thousand words," solves this problem once and for all. It is a development of our times, the beginning of a trend.

Proudly, then, and with profound thanks to my co-workers who have made this dream possible, I raise the curtain!

Charles Biro

Director

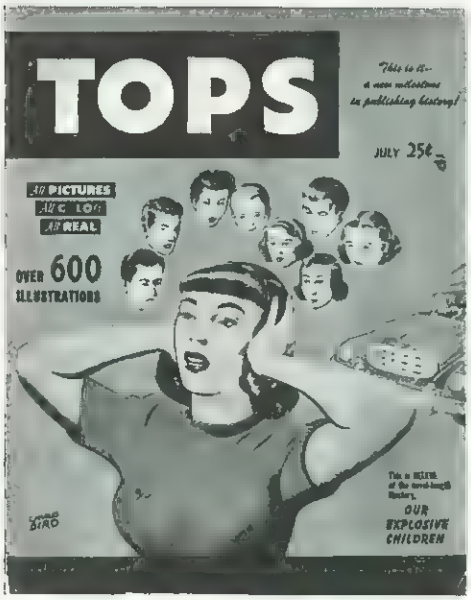
From TOPS #1, July 1949

CHARLES BIRO'S TOPS

By BILL SPICER

Biro was looking for a new kind of audience, but failed to find it or create it; the ambitions he had of elevating the routine comic strip to an advanced level of technique and style ended with the third issue. It was the first attempt to publish an adult-oriented comic magazine.

Tops appeared as a *Life* size 64-pager, in full color, that sold for a quarter. Like most other higher-priced magazines containing comics—today's *Heavy Metal* and Marvel's *Epic,* for example—*Tops* went to certain lengths to break from the image of the conventional comic book. It dressed up the cover to camouflage the package and tried to convince the reader that he wasn't reading a comic book; it was something a little like it, only much better. *Tops'* large page format took it from the sub-world of 10¢ entertainment for kids and gained retail display in the world of 25¢ entertainment for adults. While



Tops was billed as "The Adult Magazine of Dramatic Picture Stories," its content leaned toward the confession magazine and soap opera. An occasional filler and non-fiction piece would change the pace between stories about the hard-luck waitress, the good kid gone wrong, the lousy marriage, the girl from Central City who makes it big in Hollywood. *Tops* made token attempts at appealing to a general readership of both men and women, but its main potential audience seemed to be girls and women who regularly bought *True Romance.*

Through adaptations of works from other fields, "Names" were added such as Heywood Broun, Dashiell Hammett (a 2-page text), Billy Rose and Melvyn Douglas. Douglas's cariacature and endorsement were used in a #2 propaganda piece called *How You Would Live Under a World Government,* illustrated by Bob Lubbers: "Civilization is at the crossroads. Mankind may either take the high road to peace under world government or the low road to Armageddon in an atom bomb war. 'Which way are we going?' asks Melvyn Douglas."

Reliable, competent artists were hired. Along with Lubbers the first two issues featured George Tuska, Sy Barry, Bernard Sachs, Reed Crandall, Dan Barry, Bob Fuji, Tony De Preta, Fred Kida, Ed Ashe, Fred Guardineer and, illustrating covers, Biro himself. But while *Tops* was an adult comics magazine, a certain weakness of art, color and mood caused all of its stories to be far less dramatic on an adult level than the best of what kids' comics had to offer. This resulted in a style similar to that in 1940s women's magazines where bold color gave way to pastels, dramatic staging of art was replaced by simple table-top angles and where layouts were usually conservative. *Tops* made attempts at appealing to women and men, but didn't combine elements that would successfully interest both. Stories and features with a vaguely masculine slant—such as "ESCAPE . . . The Strangest Prison Break of All Time" and "World Government"—are written and drawn exactly the same way as "Marriage Swap Shop" and "Summer Waitress."

Biro as a writer developed a style that gradually superceded the function of art, becoming mainly a words man, as his later stories show. Instead of untangling duplications made by words and pictures, he was writing captions and dialogue which were merely illustrated. *Tops'* plot content alone wasn't enough to be innovative, and the art alone didn't interpret plot content sufficiently to dominate stories visually. The result was a book that maintained status quo with formulas that worked in their original context of ten-cent kids' comics but failed in what was presented as a new format for adults. The kind of evolution Biro talked about in *Tops* #1 had its seeds, some of them, in 1940s comics (Johnny Craig, Harvey Kurtzman, Will Eisner, John Stanley), a visionary idea that needed to be combined with newer advances. While Biro sensed this, he seemed incapable of making the necessary transition. *Tops'* new concept in magazine publishing proved to be as shopworn as *Crime Does Not Pay* in its final years.

Biro's idealism and high standards of writing and drawing still come through in *Tops,* if misdirected and unfocused. He wholly believed in "The Realization of a Dream," a dream that unfortunately was too short-lived to have been developed.

—Excerpted, revised and mercilessly condensed from "new Directions for the Graphic Story," a three-page article that originally appeared in GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE #8, 1967. In reply Biro wrote the following letter which was published in #9, 1968:

Your numerous observations concerning the birth and demise of *Tops* were surprisingly accurate. However, I would like to add a few details to your insights which you possibly might not have known.

With three magazines—*Daredevil, Boy* and *Crime Does Not Pay*—leading the Audit Bureau of Circulation's comics reports, they aggregately held tenth position among the nation's adult magazines next to *Look* and *Life;* these ABC reports, more than anything, had convinced me that we could successfully enter the adult field with a truly slick, upgraded, concept of the comic book format.

Having sold this idea, my hope was to increase our staff and get an appropriate budget for art, editorial and production costs, including 4-color-process covers (paintings), and the finest printing and paper. Instead, we were told that we could proceed only with the usual comic book item costs. Imagine, production of *Tops* for the price of a *Boy* or a *Daredevil* comic! That's why it was produced with Benday-line cover art, on newsprint paper, and standard comic book cover stock.

It wasn't an easy pain to bear to see this hopeful embryo doomed before its birth. Add to this, Gleason Inc.'s desire for even more titles, resulting in the creation of many subsequent ones such as *Black Diamond, Crime and Punishment,* several romance and funny-animal comics, to mention just a few. The talents of our staff became spread too thin. Not a single title from then on ever received enough needed personal attention.

So, as you can see, *Tops* had about as much chance of a fast take-off on that comic book stock and low budget as an Atlas missile would have on baking soda fuel.

What may surprise you, however, is that the first issue (without promotion, and in a poor market) sold 27% of a 55% breakeven point, the second 31%, and the third, 35%. Unfortunately, Gleason shortsightedly quit publication even before the final results of the second issue came in. We were, evidently, and in spite of it all, retaining our readers and adding new ones with each issue. *Tops* might have fooled us all and succeeded if Gleason had kept it breathing for a few issues longer. □

I think it works this way: artists are born; technicians are trained. An artist finds himself early in life. He may be sitting at a desk in elementary school at the moment when he discovers he can do more with his pencil than scribble his abc's over and over. When does the primary stimulus take place? I was sitting on the living room floor when my father took a piece of white paper and drew a little rabbit on it.

The artists here all have one thing in common. They refused to sit around and wait for someone else to say it was okay for them to publish what they were drawing. They had found themselves to be artists and it remained for them to learn enough technology so that they could get their artwork into print and share it with friends. A couple have had their work in overgrounds and a few have hit the undergrounds and all are at different stages in their development.

I've met a few and corresponded with others. Doug Hansen came to the first Underground Comix Convention which I helped organize back in April of 1973. He was about 19 at the time, a tall guy from Fresno. Joel Milke was nearing the end of his teens when we sat around a table by the pool at the El Cortez Hotel in San Diego drinking beer and watching all the comix-stars do their celebrity numbers. Doug Bryson showed up a few laters at a San Diego Comic Convention, but the majority of these artists met each other through *Comix World.* Issue #24 proclaimed "Publish your own!" and since then books have been coming out thick and fast all over the country. They're not all great books by any means, but they all have an unedited personal style that makes them unique.

How does a young artist know when he has reached the level where his stuff is publishable? How does he know when he ceases to be an apprentice? Well, many don't know. They go on submitting their work to various underground publishers and getting it rejected, and they often assume it's because it isn't any good when the truth is it's because there isn't any space available. It's a complex system with too many variables. If you think you're ready to go into print and let other people look at your stuff, then publish it yourself and see what happens. Don't expect to make any money. What you can expect is that you will get some valuable reactions to your work. You may learn something. When you send your stuff out to someone else, you always risk getting rejected, and that never feels good no matter how often or rarely it has happened to you. All of us who publish are into what we are doing, for example, and you may be doing something great, but it just isn't what we're into, so you get it back. You know, your friends are always going to tell you how great you are, but they aren't publishers and don't have any money riding on your abilities. Never expect the truth from them. I think the most contented artist (?) is one who is happy with his work and doesn't give a damn what anyone else thinks. If you're doing it for someone else (a symbolic parent), then it's a game of Please Love Me and Approve Of Me.

And is anybody really gonna love you if you're a true eccentric?

The day you discovered you were an artist, you found yourself separate from everyone else, an observer, one who called attention to the failings of mankind with little pictures. People may laugh at your gags, your insight; they may even isolate you in that special category reserved for exceptional people (artists), but underneath it all, they're not going to love you for pointing out their inadequacies and hypocrisies. You want love, give away candy on the playground or joints in the park; in the end, art is a lonely gift. □

By Clay Geerdes

NEWAVE 1980s: COMIX IN Revolution

"Why should we deny the drawing styles that come natural to us and imitate the past?"

"One day I asked myself why I kept accepting rejection slips, why I was letting other people tell me what and when I could publish? With instant printing available in every city, I could draw anything I pleased and publish it myself. My work would belong to me."

"Acceptance of the company style is defining yourself as a hack. The only real artistic freedom lies in self-publication."

In the established comics industry, an artist is trained in the bullpen until he can draw the prevailing company style. Any eccentricities or idiosyncracies in his drawing are pared away; his individual style of expression disappears as he is programmed to accept the distorted anatomy peculiar to superheroes. He is successful when he can draw Spiderman the way any other house artist would draw him. He learns to accept the repetitive factory work, inking the same swipes and poses over and over until he has forgotten the original impulses that directed him into the world of comics. He even has the illusion, maintained by a promotional machinery, that he is an artist. A worker who paints automobiles with color coded paint in an assembly plant has no illusions

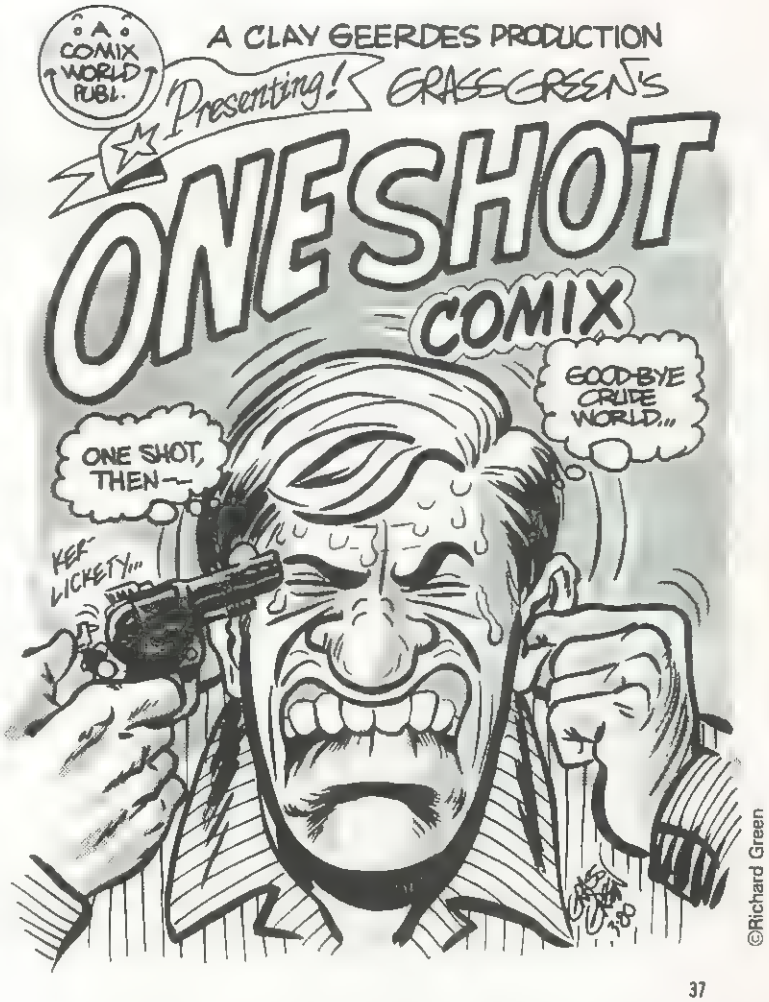
IN 1967 WE WERE ALL 14, LIVING IN ORANGE COUNTY HANGIN' OUT AT TH' PARK, SMOKIN' DOPE. WE BELIEVED IN "FLOWER POWER" IN THOSE DAYS AND WE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THE OLD FOLKS WOULDN'T LEAVE US ALONE....
PEACE
BUT FOR US, TIME MARCHED ON, WE GREW OLDER AND BEGAN TO ABANDON OUR "HIPPIE" WAYS....
DONNY DIED IN '70....
JODI BECAME A RECEPTIONIST IN A VET'S OFFICE AND MARRIED A DOCTOR....
BEEN HERE 5 YEARS!
QD'd on REDS. HE BURNT TO DEATH IN HIS CAR....
CRAIG WOUND UP IN FOLSOM, SERVING LIFE FOR ARMED ROBBERY AND MURDER...
WHO CARES?
DIANE SETTLED DOWN AND HAD THREE KIDS...
I LOVE IT!
SOME OF THE GUYS DIED IN VIET-NAM.. NO ONE WAS EVER SURE EXACTLY WHO.... OR HOW MANY....
...EVEN ONE WAS TOO MANY!
VINCE WAS ONE OF THOSE WHO BURNT OUT altogether, IN AND OUT OF JAIL EVER SINCE....
THEN I DID 6 MONTHS IN COUNTY JAIL...
MOST OF THEM, LIKE DALE, CUT THEIR HAIR AND BECAME COMPUTER PROGRAMERS OR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS FADING INTO THE GENERAL WORK FORCE....
I'M VOTIN' FOR REAGAN THIS YEAR!
MIKE, AND A FEW OTHERS WENT ON TO PERSUE THEIR LIFE-LONG AMBITIONS..
...HE BECAME A SINGER IN HONKY-TONK BARS...
AND SOME OF US (LIKE ME) REFUSED TO CUT OUR HAIR OR CONFORM....
I WANT TO LOOK LIKE THIS! IT'S ME!!
BUT NONE OF THE OLD GANG CAN UNDERSTAND THE NEW GENERATION, WHO WISHES WE WOULD LEAVE THEM ALONE!!...
TIME MARCHES ON... NO ONE IS IMMUNE!

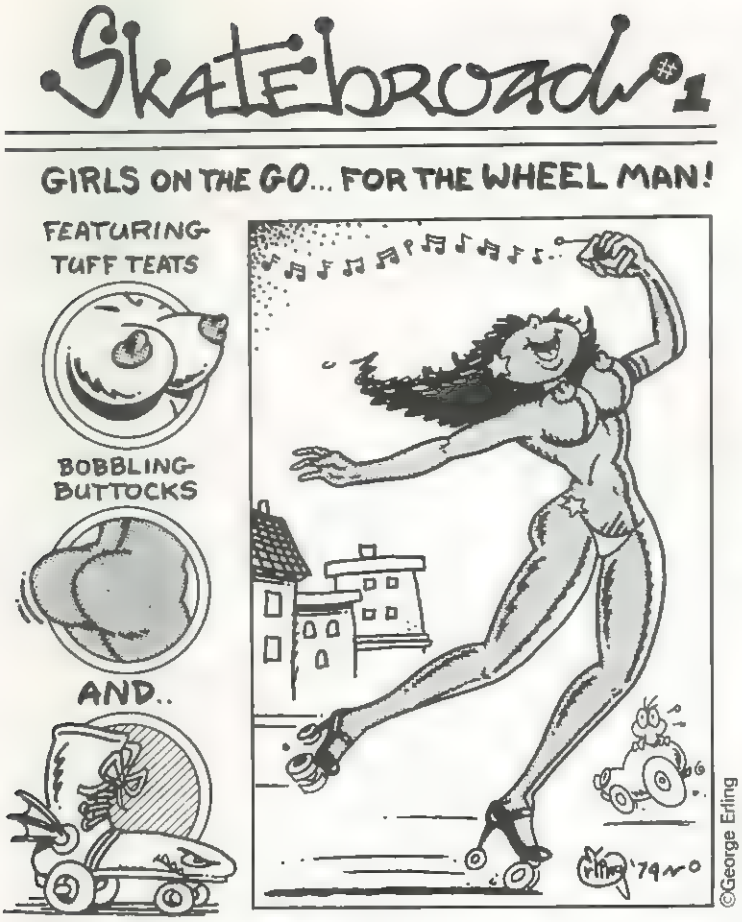
about being anything but what he is, a factory worker, but an inker in the comics establishment thinks he is an artist.

It wasn't always that way. In the early days of the comics, artists wrote and drew their own. They didn't get rich, but they belonged to themselves. It was money that motivated a few guys to start studios and initiate the factory system. From then on, it was the quantity of pages, not their quality that mattered. This early period of factory art earned the comics, notably the comic *books,* the label of "trash." The level of thought and the content had a lot to do with that public label, but it was the studio/factory system that turned out millions of books yearly that insured and perpetuated the idea that comic books were junk. The artists made money, but not a fraction of what the owners or the studios and the companies ultimately made. Most of them were sharpies who kept the artists anonymous so they couldn't gain a following. The companies maintained house names so they could replace artists when they got tired of the hack work and quit. It took the rise of organized fandom and the convention cycle to make the artists known in the sixties. Men like Matt Baker, Carl Barks, and Floyd Gottfredson began to get credit for their work at this time.

The companies simply organized a machinery of self-promotion. Seeing fandom as a publicity medium, a way of keeping young fans addicted to superheroism, the companies printed fan columns in their magazines and advertised in the major fan publications in order to control what was said in those publications. No one trying to keep a magazine going can afford to offend a major advertiser, so the way to make sure no one would ever attack the industry of superheroism was to buy fandom. Naturally, a lot of fandom was for sale, and very cheaply. Many small zines were printed by people who were totally brainwashed with superheroism. All they wanted to do was say how great this month's issue was and how much greater they hoped the next would be. There wasn't any criticism involved, no discussion of racism and sexism and agism and much of the corporate rottenness which is an integral part of the substructure of many of these comic magazines.

The conventions were even easier. Buy the con books. Promote company artists as stars. This is good for the business because it keeps the star in line through egoboo. Since he works for the company, he isn't going to say anything against the company, which means he is going to be forced into the position of defending the company line. The company gets all that promo free. The artist doesn't get any pay from the company for those free promo spots at cons. Even Hefner's bunnies make out better than the artists, because they are well paid for the promo tours. Artists do it free. By the mid-seventies, Marvel was active





in the major conventions on both coasts. The result of that activity on the West Coast may be seen in television deals (live-action Hulk, animated Spider-man and Spider-woman, a forthcoming film on Conan).

Reactions against the comics establishment have been consistent. In the early sixties, Joel Beck published a number of little comic books in Berkeley, California. These were politically-oriented books like *Lenny of Laredo, Marching Marvin, The Red Watcher,* and *The Profit.* Robert Crumb had been doing his own comix since the fifties when he published his first artwork in small mags called *Funny Friends.* By 1967, Crumb was ready with the first *Zap Comix.* The book was written and drawn by Crumb, an individual work, another strike at the factory system. *Zap* caught on rapidly when most of the material in it was ripped off and reprinted across the country in underground newspapers. That same year in Los Angeles, Gilbert Shelton struck back with his personal parody of Superman, Wonder Wart-hog. The first issue was published in magazine style. By 1968, Shelton had the Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers running serially in underground papers. The comix were happening again. The kids who had read ECs when they were nine and ten were now out to revive that spirit and it manifested in titles like Gary Arlington's *Bogeyman* and *Slow Death* and *Skull.* For many of them it seemed that comics were no longer a closed door; anyone could draw an underground comic and get it published. In a few short years more than a thousand titles appeared in the United States and Europe. When this wave began to recede, there were a few companies and a few continual titles. The underground artists had closed ranks. There were now two establishments. Neither was open to the younger cartoonists coming along. The company was closed to them because they didn't want to be company men and draw the accepted style. The underground was closed because there were only a few books being published and the space was taken by several cliques of artists who supported one another and excluded outsiders. It was time for a New Wave.

Like the undergrounds, the Newave comix were sporadic at first, gaining momentum as more and more cartoonists published. The earliest books were Dan O'Neill's *Penny-ante Republican,* the *Pandemonium Express Funnies* drawn by Kevin East, Kevin Brady, Sharon Banks and other students of O'Neill, the "Off-the-cuff" Comix published by Gary Arlington circa 1973, and the various eight-pagers that appeared at the comic conventions throughout the decade. Technically the Arlington comix are not Newave since they were published by him and not by the individual artists who drew them, but they fit the format so I have included them here.

Many of the mini-comix published since 1975 have been inspired by information in my newsletter, *Comix World.* In March of that year, I collaborated with the Pandemonium Express crew to produce an informative issue on publishing your own comix. It contained all the details for putting out a little eight-page comic. Hundreds of the little books have been printed since then, some by companies like Cascade in Colorado, Comix World in Berkeley, but most of them by individuals who learn the technique and just go ahead and do their own.

The books are not limited in subject matter. I have a title, *Babyfat,* which I have used as an educative medium for apprentice artists. The little mag contains illos of weird news items. I collect these and when someone writes to me expressing interest in the minis I assign them one of the news items to illustrate. I print most of the panels I receive, whatever their style or quality, because the point is not to showcase only polished near-professional art, but to give the new artist a chance to get something out there in print, something that will stimulate correspondence, criticism, and ultimately improvement. There are a dozen issues of *Babyfat* as of this writing and the art is both pro and amateur, the pro artists often contributing because they enjoy doing a panel once in awhile that is not controlled by the editorial board and they want to help younger artists.

Newave is not simple to define. It's a term like any other which refers more to a new generation of artists than to any particular theme or school of art. Underground and pro artists have appeared in these small comix so there is some overlap. Southern California artist, Valentino, says what he likes about the medium is that anyone can get in on it by just drawing and publishing a comic. Once you have one in print, you can trade with others and the process leads to a lot of artistic friendships. The artists are mostly American, though I have published art by Hunt Emerson (England) and Roldo and Brad Caslor (both Canadians). When I made up the last list of contributors, they came from Texas (Brad Foster, Doug Bryson), New Jersey (George Erling, Walter Rodgers, John Valandingham), Pennsylvania (Alex Tamsula and Garry Hardman), Illinois (Jim Siergey and Gary Whitney), and Utah (Par Holman). It's my practice to send the list to all the others so they can contact one another, and the result has been a lot of comix in progress, books like Par Holman's *Noo-Toons,* Valentino's *First Klass,* Doug Bryson's *Cap'n Retro,* and Jamie Alder's unique *Tales Too Tough For T-V.*

It's my feeling that Newave always refers to the current generation of cartoonists, the new folks learning and perfecting their cartoon style. Being able to publish on their own and to meet other people through these publications is helpful. Since everyone has different ideas, the entire field of comix becomes more diverse. A small comic like Gary

IT'S TOUGH, BUT YOU TOO CAN
QUIT SMOKING...
OF COURSE, YOU HAVE TO HAVE A FEW GOOD REASONS TO QUIT...
•THAT COUGH THAT "NEVER SEEMS TO GO AWAY"
KOF!
•REEKING STALE STENCH ON CLOTHES AND SKIN
•FUNKY ENCRUSTED TEETH WITH DEAD SKUNK'S ASSHOLE BREATH SYNDROME
•BURN HOLES IN GOOD SUITS, SHIRTS, PANTS
•SHOOTING PAINS IN HEART AREA
EEEEZE EEEE
•RATTLING, WHEEZING EMPHYSEMA LUNGS
•NAUSEATING, REPULSIVE STINKING YELLOW FINGERS
•UTTER DISDAIN FROM SMART FOLKS WHO DON'T WANT TO BREATHE YOUR PUKEY USED SMOKE!
©Par Holman

VARIOUS METHODS OF QUITTING HAVE BEEN TRIED OVER THE YEARS WITH VARYING DEGREES OF SUCCESS...
RESTRAINT IS FINE IF YOU CAN MAINTAIN YOUR COOL...
AVOIDING SEDUCTIVE ADVERTISING HELPS KEEP YOUR MIND OFF CIGS...
"I SMOKE AND I'M SEXY"
ACME BRAINWASHING KIT
PART OF THE ATTRACTION OF SMOKING IS THE HOLDING OF THE CIGARETTE...
CHUNK
THIS CURES THAT ATTRACTION!
...FOR THE ORAL FIXATION TYPES, ADULT PACIFIERS...
...FUN TO SUCK 'N' NO LUNG CANCER!
* SEVERAL OPTIONAL MODELS FOR WOMEN AVAILABLE!
2

Whitney's *Windy City* is possible; he is able to do his own work there while collaborating with Jay Lynch on a regulation underground like *Phoebe and the Pigeon People*. Since different parts of the country are represented, ideas become diluted and changed. The Newaves become composite hybrid sociological tracts, containing cartoon commentary on the contemporary world, unrestricted by editorial censorship or commercial pressures. Unlike the undergrounds which have become typed as sex and violence comix in many areas of the country, the Newaves are without any absolutes. One may find anything in them from weird sex to political commentary, but one cannot ever be sure of just what will be in any Newave at any given time. While the undergrounds tend to be pro-dope, the Newaves are not. *First-Klass* contains an anti-belladonna story.

While the big companies have taken comics away from people and made them a repetitious product and an expensive game to be played by collectors, the Newave movement returns comix to everyone as a means of expression and friendship. Anyone can draw and publish one. Anyone can belong. No particular style is predominant; indeed, evolving a new and unique style is what it's all about.

Just as some of the underground artists of the sixties have gone to work for Warren or Marvel, it's likely that some of the current newavers will opt for the money one day, but I'd be willing to bet that even if they do they will sneak out and publish a little eight-pager on their own once in awhile. □

Clay Geerdes is the publisher of a newsletter on contemporary comix. COMIX WORLD began in GRAPHIC STORY WORLD, ran as a column in the LOS ANGELES FREE PRESS, and is now in its 9th year of publication. $10 for 2 years from Clay, Box 7081, Berkeley, California 94707. The mini-comix mentioned in this article sell for $5 a dozen from Clay. Sample and listing for 50¢ and a stamp.

The introduction to this article was excerpted from Clay's essay in ECCENTRICS, a 44-page digest-size magazine of alternative comix available for $2.25 from publisher Brad Foster, 4109 Pleasant Run, Irving, Texas 75062.

At this writing, COMIX WORLD is putting together a new magazine devoted to the work of Newave cartoonists. The mag will be 5½ x 8½ and will contain artwork, writing, photography, and some collagerie—also commentary on Newave and the current trends in comix.

Valentino, who has work in many Newave comix is editing the first anthology COMIC BOOK to contain all Newave art.

...ALL THE ARTIFICIAL METHODS EVER INVENTED WILL NEVER TAKE THE PLACE OF GOOD OL' FASHIONED
WILL POWER!!
I QUIT IN '77—JUST PITCHED THEM CIGS * AWAY...
BEGONE, O FOUL AND MALODOUROUS LIFE-ROBBERS!
FLOP!
IT WAS TOUGH AT FIRST, BUT I REMAINED STRONG AND HAVE NOT TOUCHED A CIG SINCE...ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS GET OTHER INTERESTS TO OCCUPY YOUR TIME AND GET YOUR MIND OFF THAT UNHEALTHY SMOKING!
PAR HOLMAN ©1980
HI-CAL COLA
GOOD 'N' FOR'N LIARS
MARS
-END-
* "LARK"—if you must know.

Vargas

For a quarter century Vargas's watercolors of women in the pages of *Esquire* and *Playboy* made him the master of the pinup. And as he celebrates his eighty-fifth birthday this year in his modest Westwood home, it feels somehow reassuring that he has not been forgotten.

"I intend to show that I'm still *numero uno,*" he says emphatically in the Spanish accent he still retains after more than fifty years in the United States. "I don't like to brag. I'll let my work brag for me." Vargas's work stopped cold in 1974, after the death of his wife. This last year, however, has seen his return thanks partially to one of the other important influences of our recent history—rock 'n' roll.

The Cars were searching around for a cover concept for the ever-treacherous follow-up album to their platinum debut of 1978. David Robinson, their drummer, is a collector of pinup art and suggested contacting Vargas.

The mustachioed Vargas brushes off the thought of rock 'n' roll. "I don't like it. It is to me what the modernists are to painting. I prefer Beethoven. But the project was a challenge. When Anna Mae died (he was married to her for nearly fifty years) I stopped painting almost entirely. I felt like I had been yanked out of the world. I wanted to get back into circulation. I didn't know whether I could do it. I didn't know if I still had the powers."

Urged on by his family, Vargas produced the cover of The Cars' successful *Candy-O* album. The delicate, perfectly proportioned woman reclining on the hood of a Ferrari proved to Vargas that the old magic was still there.

"I found that my hands and eye were perfect." He stretches out his arm, his hand motionless. "I have now twenty-five to thirty paintings I never finished that I want to complete and leave as a legacy to my family. Now I am working again." A Vargas calendar for 1980 is a by-product of his new-found energy.

This, however, is but a post-script to the career of a man whose name conjures up visions of the female form for millions. His life has been touched by a romance on the scale of an Olivier-Leigh affair, blacklisting as a Communist, being the innocent victim of unscrupulous New York publishers, and fame as the finest practitioner of nude-figure illustration.

Vargas, his 1978 autobiography, makes a great deal of Anna Mae Clift and properly so. She was a show girl on Broadway in a company that rivaled Florenz Ziegfeld's Follies. Vargas met her in 1917 and she became his first model. She posed in her spare time for the "little artist" with the quaint gentlemanliness of the Old World. Vargas's kind intelligence was a respite from the Jazz Age and its bright lights and carefree attitude. He was a struggling artist who knew what he wanted to do—to paint beauty—and that was all.

A native of Peru, Vargas had gone to study photography in Switzerland at the age of fifteen. After Zurich, his father instructed him to travel to England to begin an apprenticeship, but World War I got in the way. Because of wartime restrictions, England was shut off from the Continent—but America wasn't, so the impetuous, impulsive Vargas grabbed the opportunity.

His arrival in New York City is an image that remains as clear to him now as it was that October day of 1916. "It was noontime and I was standing at the corner of Fourteenth and Broadway with my two bags. All of a sudden hundreds of girls came out, stenographers and secretaries. I took one look at the *gringas* and was amazed at how their style was different, more intriguing, than European women. I stood there and said 'My god, this is beautiful.' I knew I was going to stay."

Almost exclusively concentrating on paintings of women, Vargas came to the attention of the impresario himself, Flo Ziegfeld. He was commissioned to paint thirty-by-forty-inch watercolor boards of the show's stars that would be hung on the walls of the lobby of the New Amsterdam Theatre. For the next dozen years Vargas had at his disposal the most beautiful and well-known models in the country as well as a number of other personalities, such as W.C. Fields and Eddie Cantor. His paintings, at the request of Ziegfeld, reeked with an air of alluring sexuality but shied away from blatant nudity. In private, however, many subjects posed nude for Vargas's personal work. Among them was Anna Mae.

Painting or photographing nudes has always been a suspicious occupation. Doing so in the twenties required an even greater artistic integrity than today. Vargas painted nearly constantly, during the days commercially, at night for himself. "People would ask me what I did nights because they never saw me out on the town. I'd say that I work. They'd ask, 'On what?' I'd tell them girls. They thought I was either crazy or had a great imagination."

Anna Mae knew neither was true and they fell in love. When they were married in 1930, Alberto had to borrow money for the license. The depression had put an end to Broadway extravaganzas and artists are alwahs the first to feel the heat of economic troubles. Vargas worked unceasingly and saw little financial reward. He was rescued finally by Hollywood.

He worked for all the major studios, drawing portraits (his Shirley Temple still hangs in the Fox commissary), doing ad illustrations, and so on. Busby Berkeley landed him a job at Warner Brothers' design department and he and Anna

By Sal Manna

OPPOSITE PAGE: Photographed by Mario Casilli in 1965 for **Playboy**, *Vargas poses in front of his one-sheet poster for Warner Brothers' 1933* **Ladies They Talk About** *with Barbara Stanwyck. THIS PAGE: The Cars'* **Candy-O** *album cover (1979), and detail from the June 1943* **Esquire** *gatefold, "Something for the Boys".*

Mae moved permanently to Westwood in 1936, to the same house where Vargas lives now. In an age in which transience is the norm, the stark solidity of Vargas astounds those of us of a later generation. The phases of his life are measured in decades, not months. Perhaps because of his South American and European roots, he lacks the overweaning ambition that governs many of the rest of us. All he has ever wanted to do is paint. He had no need to be rich. As long as he had his books, his poetry, his art, he was satisfied.

In the thirties, Vargas was appalled by figure illustration in national magazines, particularly by George Petty at *Esquire.* Vargas's fellow artists at the Hollywood studios would bring in Petty's latest cartoon and ask him what he thought. "I told them I could make it better. I'd take a ruler to the girl's calf and show how it was out of proportion. If I drew a woman like that she'd kill me. They stunk, and everyone laughed at me because they didn't understand. I worked hard to teach myself to draw. I worked on anatomy endlessly. I would study the anatomy ofthe finger. Why does it move this way or that? How does it do it? Measure, measure, measure, all the time."

Vargas is a man of his word—literally. His work has always been accomplished on the strength solely of a handshake (except for one unfortunate instance we will get to shortly). When his fellow studio workers wanted to organize a union, Vargas walked out. His belief in individual freedom blackballed him with the studios as a consequence. Without a job or the hope of any relief, he bused back to New York with a portfolio and a suit of clothes, leaving Anna Mae for the only time in their relationship. For two-and-a-half months he interviewed day and night. Still, he found no work. He quickly discovered that he had been blacklisted as a Communist because of his position during the strike and his frequently radical political conversations. With Anna Mae on the verge of a nervous breakdown and Alberto seeing little sunlight, the future seemed dim indeed.

Ironically, it was Petty who saved Vargas from anonymity. The heads of *Esquire* wanted Petty, an insolent sort, replaced. There was only one man whose watercolors of women and airbrush technique could match Petty and that was Vargas. What separated the two was that Vargas's creations seemed more real, both physically and in attitude—they were not perpetually smiling with a redundancy of personality that was Petty's.

So was born the Varga Girl, the monthly pinup that traveled with American soldiers around the globe during World War II. (His superiors thought Varga Girl sounded better than Vargas.) A survey taken a few years ago among Americans who were stationed abroad during The Big One revealed that two of their most frequent memories were of Glenn Miller's Air Force Band and the Varga Girl. The pinup calendar became a staple of young adulthood—and adolescence. When the United States Postal Department issued *Esquire* a summons in August, 1943, questioning its right to mailing privileges on grounds of violating obscenity statutes, particularly by the Varga Girl, the pinup's success was assured.

What happened next was an episode Vargas declines to discuss. Forever trusting, unconcerned with money and intrinsically honest, he had failed to read carefully his contract with *Esquire*, the only such document he had ever signed. When he balked at its inhuman workload, ridiculously low pay, and the lack of residuals for products that were associated with the name "Varga," in tromped hordes of lawyers and four years of costly litigation. In the end, Vargas lost; naivete has never been a particularly useful defense in court.

Fortunately, a former *Esquire* ad man by the name of Hugh Hefner also left the magazine in a money dispute. (He had asked for a $5 raise and when they refused he walked out the door.) In 1953 Hefner began *Playboy* in Chicago. Three years later Vargas had taken another mortgage on his house to finance a trip to the Windy City to show El Hefe, as he calls him, his collection of never-before-published large nudes. Hefner recalled that meeting in his foreward to Vargas's biography: "As soon as he removed the first one from its covering I had the feeling that something lasting was about to begin. The work was exquisite."

Playboy published Vargas's work periodically until finally, in 1959, the Vargas Girl became a regular feature. In a sixteen-year period he produced 152 paintings. "When I first came to America," says Vargas, "I noticed that all the magazines had a girl or boy on the cover. In Europe the magazines had nothing on the cover. Here, there was no magazine without a girl. This is heaven, I thought. There was a formula there and *Playboy* picked up on it. Hefner started it when all the other magazines were failing. He had designed the rabbit symbol and the idea of playmates and he didn't know where to fit me in for a while. He told me to give him time and he'll call. He did."

Vargas lent to *Playboy* more than simply one illustration per month; he gave the fledgling enterprise a sense of tradition. Then in his sixties, Vargas represented a link with the Bohemian

twenties, and, in his art anyway, a loosening of sexual mores. Here was no upstart drawing dirty pictures on bathroom walls. Here was an artist of great repute who had been painting for decades what *Playboy* was finally photographing in the age of Eisenhower. Vargas became unquestionably the finest illustrator of nudes of this century.

Anna Mae's death in 1974 was a terrible blow to Vargas. He could not pick up a brush for four years. He felt very alone and lost. Even today his conversation is peppered with references to her and the reverence in which he holds her memory is affecting. He looks into your eyes and tells you with a voice that seems to say that yes, this, *this* is what life on earth is all about, that "she was someone I could trust with my very soul."

Soul. That's a useful word to describe Vargas, ignoring its hackneyed modern connotation. His work has been sexual without being sexist, nude without being lewd. He has always displayed a sense that there was something else to say in a painting of a nude woman than "Here is a beautiful body." He has always respected women and especially his models.

"I don't like to overpower and dominate. If I were in her place I wouldn't stand for it and so why should she? *Lo cortez, no quita lo valiente.* Courtesy does not diminish manhood. You can't lose being a gentleman. There isn't a model in the world who can say I ever got fresh. Just because I drew them doesn't mean I loved them."

Titillation has never been a part of his palette. "Personality comes through moments, through talk. That makes *simpatico.* When you can put that on canvas then you have something. To show some love, to give the impression of a warm person is the height. Showing arrogance is nothing." Not surprisingly, Vargas's choices for the two most beautiful women today are people not classically considered beauties. Bardot has never interested him. He prefers Jane Fonda and Candice Bergen. "Fonda is *open.* She has an intriguing style. Candice Bergen is *soft.* She has a stunning smile." He adds, always the artist of proportion, "I suspect, though, that her legs are a little chubby just by the way she dresses."

Vargas disapproves of the current trend in men's magazines toward more graphic nudity. "They have hit the wall. What's next? They've shown everything there is to show. Nothing's left to the imagination. It's all there. All they can do is show more of the same. As an artist I'm offended, but the pull of the forbidden fruit is too potent and I know that."

He has had far too much experience with artists being stifled to raise his voice too loud. And though some may think him a bit too Victorian today, there was a time when he was thought too Bohemian. A 1927 painting entitled "Smoke Dreams" was significant not simply for the bare-breasted woman sitting cross-legged in a nightgown but because she was also enjoying a cigarette. In France at the start of World War I he was arrested; the books of poetry he carried were confiscated as subversive. Vargas's cries of "But this is literature!" were to no avail. He has never understood why so many obstacles—economic, political—are put in the way of those searching for Keats's Truth and Beauty.

"I believe you set yourself free. It is up to you. And you set yourself free by telling the truth, to yourself and others. Whether it is life or art you have to be true. Every stroke of my brush means something to me. I can't do anything that has no meaning."

A prime example of his infusing of meaning into an illustration is my favorite Vargas painting, called "World War II." In 1975, the *Chicago Tribune* commissioned him to paint his impression of the war as part of the newspaper's series of special bicentennial commemorative art. The result is a watercolor that rivets the eyes and the imagination. The horizontal painting shows a nude woman, back to the viewer, lying on her side. You cannot see her face or the front of her body. She wears a wedding ring on her one visible hand and holds a Purple Heart medal. She has one leg slightly raised. Structurally, that is the core of the painting. What it conveys emotionally, however, is quite another matter.

The woman's body is tense, anxious. Muscles in her back and ribs are taut. She is ready for her lover to return. She oozes with sexual anticipation. It appears that she has been waiting for a long time and is growing weary, sleepy. Her lover has been injured in the war and so too has she. She is disillusioned but she is quiet. She is probably not crying, she is meditative and quiet. When her lover returns she will be warm and soft but something has changed. Perhaps it is the presence of regret. She wants love and cares less about the future than the present. Life is short and love is long could be her motto.

An artist who can elicit this much emotion from a viewer of a painting of a nude woman's back knows something valuable about the human heart and soul. A *Playboy* executive once wrote, accurately, of Vargas that he "is a man who knows how to love." His love of beauty would encourage him in his early days to paint for three days without sleep, occasionally running out into the middle of the street for a breath of fresh air. When he paints today he puts Beethoven symphonies on the stereo and plays them end to end. To the beat of the music he'll stroke the delicate eyelashes on a girl. For him, beauty is timeless, which explains why a man in his eighties is still capable of capturing beauty in the modern world. His secret has been not what the eyes of a woman look like but what they say.

It occurs to me of course that there are some in the reading audience, particularly women, who object to Vargas's work. I hope they have read this far to acknowledge that I am aware of their misgivings. Granted, the concept of the pinup is not one bound to survive the march of social progress and enlightenment. Yet Vargas's work was an important step toward liberation. The proper criticism of the pinup is that it is one-dimensional, perpetuating the myth of woman as either the whore or the madonna. What Vargas managed to accomplish, looking back on the entire scope of his illustrations, was the presentation of women as human beings. They are free in mind and sexual in body and Vargas portrayed both characteristics. Feminists will balk at his "perfect" women but even in his search for the perfection of beauty it has been a human, essentially female quality. There is the inkling of reality, of possibility.

As I continued talking with Vargas, it struck me that life is a series of meetings with masters. You remember a high school teacher, or a fry cook at the restaurant you used to work at, or a rarely-seen but much talked about relative. You'll remember a Vargas painting dog-eared in the hidden *Playboy* and what it meant to your sense of art and beauty. And you'll be glad that true masters never stray from either. □

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Portion of a Ziegfeld poster, circa 1920.

Deco Venus, circa 1930.

Esquire gatefold, November 1943.

Fanfare FORUM

Lynn Folsom
Los Angeles, California

I sure hope this letter makes some sense because I'm so darn happy it may come out all mixed up. Today I walked into my favoite book store to get my new *Star Wars* books, and Wham! there it was. *Fanfare* #3, Spring 1980. But who was on the cover? My absolute dream man, yes indeed. You can keep your Redfords and your Travoltas. I'll take Captain Harlock ANY DAY.

Well, I nearly forgot about *Star Wars* and just about anything else. I bought three copies and tore home to find out who was this divine vision. The first time I saw the Captain was in *Roadshow,* which I of course cannot read. I took it all over town trying to find someone who could tell me his name and what the story was all about. Until your wonderful article and pictures I was dreaming in the dark.

Believe me I'd give any amount to join that Cartoon/Fantasy Organization you spoke of. And to write letters to Japanese fans. Especially any other Harlock fans. I just can't believe that foxy child's show wasn't renewed. I want to know everything possible about him. I'd like to buy posters, stills, articles, whatever. I'd really appreciate any help you could give me. I do hope there are a few books about him.

Like I say, I'm a dyed in the wool *Star Wars* fan, 130 times Part One and 20 so far on *Empire.* But my love in *Star Wars* isn't any of the human characters, it's the ship Millennium Falcon. But Capt. Harlock is just something else. I've seen a lot of dudes, live, in the movies, what have ya, but they just don't come any better than the Capt. Not for my money.

Hope to hear from you real soon. This really means a lot to me. I'll do anything I can to help you and your fine club. Anything to show my appreciation for your helping to make a dream come true.

● *The American TV rights to Space Pirate Captain Harlock have been bought by a Hollywood distribution company, Ziv International. They've been preparing an English translation of the series, and they're just about ready to start marketing it to syndicated TV stations. Ziv kindly loaned its English-dubbed pilot episode to the Cartoon/Fantasy Organization for a screening, and the fans were favorably impressed. But Ziv president Irv Holender warns that it may be an uphill battle to sell Harlock in the U.S. because Japanese animation has gotten a bad reputation from poor ratings of Battle of the Planets and Star Blazers. The fact that those two programs were shown in time-slots that made it virtually impossible for them to get good ratings is considered irrelevant by the TV industry.*

—Fred Patten

Fred Velez
New York City, New York

I have recently renewed my interest in Japanese cartoons and your article "TV Animation in Japan" helped my curiosity grow. I was into the Japanese cartoons back in the '60s as most everyone else was back then. In New York, I'm lucky enough to have the opportunity of not only seeing an old favorite of mine again (Speed Racer) but, thanks to cable and the UHF stations, Astro Boy, Captain Harlock and Chobin as well.

The latter two I find more fascinating since they're shown in the original Japanese. Of the two, only Harlock has subtitles. But not knowing the language doesn't take away my enjoyment when I see Chobin. I find the series, which seems to be about a little alien-child separated from his mother, both humorous and charming. I would particularly like to know the main plotline of the series so it would help me understand it better, even though I more or less guessed it out. I would also like to know if there is a soundtrack album available of both Chobin and Captain Harlock. I'm interested in other Japanese cartoon soundtracks as well as the Japanese comic books of these series, especially Chobin and Harlock.

One thing that has struck me about Japanese animated shows is their overall quality in both style and storyline that's head and shoulders above anything done in the United States. The humor and pathos of these series really make them stand out. With the exciting adventures of Harlock, and the funny yet sad exploits of Chobin to watch, I don't even bother to turn on my TV Saturday mornings — except for Flash Gordon, which I feel is the only American cartoon to come closest to the quality of the Japanese shows. (I might also include Jonny Quest and a few other 1960s superhero shows put out by Hanna-Barbera.)

● *Taki Sugiyama's Complete Works of TV Animation contains two pages on Chobin, but unfortunately all I can read of it is the credits. Chobin was created by cartoonist Shotaro Ishimori; it was animated by a studio called Stage Zero in 26 half-hour episodes, and was originally broadcast weekly from 5 April to 27 September 1974 in a 7:30-8:00 p.m. timeslot. There was a Chobin 45-rpm record issued at the time, now out of print. However, there are several Captain Harlock LPs available from Nippon Columbia, including a symphonic suite (CQ-7005), twelve songs including the opening & closing themes from the soundtrack (CS-7070), a soundtrack drama in Japanese (CS-7129), a soundtrack drama in English (CZ-7023), an arrangement of the symphonic suite for two pianos (CQ-7023), and more. Japanese imported-record shops in Los Angeles charge $14 to $16 each.*

—F.P.

Stephen M. Bowell
Burnaby, B.C. Canada

When a copy of *Fanfare* No. 3 turned up among items for sale at V-Con 8, the Eighth Annual Vancouver Science Fiction Convention, and I saw the cover picture of Captain Harlock, I had to have it. I am one of probably a handful of fans in English Canada (I know of only one other in Vancouver) of the character. I was expecting a cover story on him alone, but I was grateful for the few paragraphs on him within the context of the survey of Japanese animation.

Captain Harlock has been running Saturday mornings since last fall on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's *French* network, under the title of *Albator, le Corsaire de l'Espace.* (After following him faithfully since stumbling upon him by accident last October, after the serial had started, I will always think of him as Albator.) Thanks to the bizarre, futile "National Unity" policy of the Canadian government, every major Canadian city must have Radio-Canada (CBC French) on one of its TV channels, even though only a handful of people outside Quebec ever watch it. So *Albator* runs every Saturday morning at 11 in Vancouver (unless there's an afternoon sports event in Montreal, in which case *it* runs in the morning, by B.C. time, and *Albator* is shifted to 3 p.m.)

Once the network ran an opening network credit, which it usually cuts, indicating that *Albator* is probably dubbed and post-produced in France, for broadcast on a consortium of francophone networks: Antenne 2 in France, Radio-Canada, Radio-Suisse, Belvision, etc. The effect of Japanese filtered through French, two alien world-views, is quite strange, and is not rendered easier by the fact that the French dubbers have the same problem that their English counterparts do on *Yamato/Star Blazers.* Japanese is apparently a more compact language than either English or French. So dubbers in both languages have to race through their lines to get them out before the characters' lips have stopped moving. Both the other Vancouver fan and I have some French, but it's not quite fluent. So when we meet once a week we compare notes on what each of us was able to pick up in this week's episode, and try to figure out between us what happened.

Is *Albator* cut and watered down? I don't know. The version I watch runs 23 to 24 minutes, with no commercials. The plot is extremely complex and convoluted, and resonates with sexual symbolism. The graphics sometimes approach what limited animation might be like if the senior animator were Jim Steranko. Soundtrack full of sea chanteys? Not in the version I watch. The only singing is at the beginning and end, in which a French male chorus sing the *Albator* theme, a heroic march. Is the incidental music throughout the show the same as in Japan, or was new music written in France?

In the French version the captain's name is Albator and his ship is the *Atlantis.* His teenage-looking lieutenants are named Ramis and Nausicaa. The blue-skinned, golden-eyed woman whose relationship with Albator is unclear (but intimate in an ethereal sort of way) is named Clio, and the little Caucasian-skinned, blue-haired girl with the ocarina is named Stellie. Having come into the story after the beginning, I thought for weeks that Stellie was the daughter of Albator and Clio, but in a later episode it was established that she was the daughter of the builder of the *Atlantis,* Toshiro, whose "soul" was now in the ship's computer. Toshiro is the little fellow with the big hat, cloak and glasses that Tetsuro ap-

parently meets in an episode of *Galaxy Express 999*, according to a still I saw in a Japanese animation book. But in *Albator*, Toshiro is long dead. What events are supposed to have happened in what order in the various Matsumoto series? There is obviously a running continuity underlying all of them, as there was in the early Marvel super-hero comics when there were only seven titles and Stan Lee wrote them all. In one episode of *Albator*, for instance, Albator finds the wreck of a spaceship destroyed in battle long ago, with the skeleton of its captain, under whom Albator's present engineer once served, still upright and gripping the wheel. The derelict is a dead ringer for the *Yamato*.

Please put me in contact with your animation club. I want as much information, artwork, etc., on Harlock/Albator as I can get. Is there an outline of the various episodes in English, so I can check on what I've missed? Is there a Harlock/Albator album, such as I've seen of *Galaxy Express 999*? Is there a book of original comic strips, such as I've seen of *Yamato*?

● *There's a special U.S./Canadian fan club for Matsumoto fans, The Captain Harlock/Galaxy Express 999 Fan Club, which has been translating/analyzing Albator in some depth for English-speaking fans. They've also been trying to help provide Albator and other French-imported Japanese-animation merchandising items to fans who live outside French-Canadian shopping areas. Contact Douglas Orlowski, 135 Blanchard Street, Thunder Bay (P), Ontario P7A 7J6; or Craig Walker, 72 Royal Oak Drive, R.R. #4, Barrie, Ontario L4M 4S6. Both are also members of the Cartoon/Fantasy Organization, and Walker is trying to recruit enough Canadians into it to start a special Canadian chapter. The C/FO doesn't handle merchandising itself, but most members have gotten into the habit of buying their Japanese comics from Books Nippan, 532 West Sixth Street, Los Angeles, Ca. 90014. This is a Japanese bookshop which accepts mail orders, and which we have found to provide good service. They carry Leiji Matsumoto's original 5-volume Captain Harlock comic book, as well as several animation albums that reproduce scenes from the TV series in full color. They also have the 22-volume Astro Boy by Osamu Tezuka. However, everything is in Japanese; there are no English translations. As for story dates, Yamato is set in 2199 A.D. and Harlock in 2977 A.D.*

—F.P.

Russ Martin
Gainesville, Florida

I was both enchanted and fascinated by your article on Japanese animation. I'd read about the massive marketing of series in Japan and, while I've seen some of the more emaciated cartoons over here, I never truly understood the spirit of what they were doing. I picked up some stunning color posters in a toy store about a year ago; at least one of them seems to be the Great Mazinger, another resembles one of the Getta robots.

A lot of the visual approach in your illustrations are highly suggestive of a period in Japanese art called "The Decadents." Work by Hokusai, Hiroshige, and particularly Kunioshi, are obvious antecedents of comic book art. Some of the woodcuts and screen paintings show successive panels of a mythical warrier battling demons with surrounding narrative text. I've seen some fantasy scenes from that period that have what actually appear to be word balloons above the figures. You might want to look up some of the work by these artists (18th Century, I believe) for a clue or two about the visual power that is such a salient ingredient of Japanese fantasy. These people have a legendary history that is rich in exotic and dreamlike imagery. It probably accounts for the liberal parameters in their entertainment.

While I'm at it, I'd enjoy hearing about your cartoon fan club. Does it, for instance, publish a fanzine? Is there an American fandom of Japanese fantasy art and entertainment? Besides sporadic animation, I've been exposed to some of the insane kids' series in live action: *Ultraman, Spectreman, Space Giants, Inframan* — and I assume there's merchandising done on most of that, to pay for the little cardboard models of Tokyo they blow up every week.

● *It seems inevitable that Japanese animation should be strongly influenced by Japanese artistic tradition, even in the SF adventure cartoons which are consciously derivative of Occidental superhero comics and SF-magazine illustrations. There's an episode of a Moomintroll animation series, based upon Finnish author Tove Jansson's internationally-famous children's fantasies, in which Moomintroll encounters a number of hobgoblins in a dark forest; the hobgoblins are all drawn straight out of Japanese mythology as depicted in the work of The Decadents. This influence is especially obvious in the animated programs with Japanese settings, such as Dororo.*

The Cartoon/Fantasy Organization can be contacted at 11863 West Jefferson Blvd., Culver City, Calif. 90230. Officially it publishes a fanzine, FANTA'S ZINE, but the next issue due is over six months behind schedule and I wouldn't care to guess how long it'll be until it comes out. Past issues have contained lengthy articles on such series as Space Cruiser Yamato, Ultraman, and Gatchaman/Battle of the Planets (including comparisons of the Japanese and American versions of the programs).

There's also an active club operating out of Chicago, The Japanese Fantasy Film Society, P.O. Box 59163, Chicago, Ill. 60645. They publish a bi-monthly newsletter which carries good capsule summaries of new Japanese SF TV programs, both animation and live-action.

Ultraman, Spectreman, Space Giants are Japanese live-action TV kids' series, yes, but Inframan is a theatrical motion-picture imitation of them, done in Hong Kong for the non-Communist Chinese film market. Speaking of live-action programs of that type, I wonder if Walt Disney Productions, currently producing a costumed-hero/secret-agent spy-comedy titled Condorman, knows there was a Japanese live TV super-hero program of that same title in 1975?

—F.P.

Steven Alan Bennett
Akron, Ohio

As strange as it is to admit it now, two of the biggest influences of my childhood were *Kimba the White Lion* and *Astro Boy* (and I was always puzzled and amazed by the appearances of the incredible Mr. Pompus in both series. Any explanation?) I even sat through endless reruns of near dreck like *Speed Racer* and *Marine Boy* because of the incredible imagination that was lacking in the Hanna-Barbera shows I grew up on.

Something I've been wondering about for quite some time concerning your C/FO group is the language barrier. I see from the cover of *Animage* that it's a bilingual magazine (is this a common practice?), but I was wondering how much enjoyment you get from the cartoons without English dubs.

And I was wondering if English versions of Japanese comics exist in some form. I've been told that because of the differences in panel structure, thanks to the differences in our languages, that even if they were translated into English, most Westerners wouldn't understand them. Is this true? After learning that both *Kimba* and *Astro Boy* were derived from comics, I've been anxious to get hold of English versions. I understand there is a 22-volume series of Astro Boy's adventures.

I think I have an alternative way to bring in unbastardized versions of Japanese cartoons. Cable television. Specifically, Home Box Office. They need a large source of material previously unseen by U.S. audiences, and they wouldn't have to edit the sex and violence out of the programs. I don't suppose there's such a thing as a soft porn cartoon? A recent news feature on Japanese television said that late-night soft porn live-action programs were very common.

● *Kimba the White Lion and Astro Boy were both created by Osamu Tezuka, originally as comic books and later filmed after he opened his animation studio. Tezuka tends to use all of his characters as actors, in the same manner that Ed Wheelan did in his American comic strip Minute Movies; and one of Tezuka's favorites is Mr. Pompus, whose Japanese name is Higeoyagi, or Old Pop Moustache. In some of Tezuka's recent animated cartoons, which haven't been seen in the U.S. yet, Mr. Pompus has appeared as a San Francisco private detective, a bartender in a Mos Eisley-type spaceport dive, a schoolteacher, and the proprietor of a trading post on an alien planet. Dr. Elefun, the kindly mentor in Astro Boy, has appeared in such diverse roles as a Renfield-type vampire's flunky and as a disillusioned scientist who destroys his life's work to keep politicians from misusing it.*

The language barrier is something that I suppose the C/FO became acclimated to gradually. When the club started, back in 1977, we considered that we were being very avant garde for showing some Japanese cartoons with English subtitles along with the English-dubbed cartoons like Astro Boy. By now we consider it perfectly normal to sit through a Japanese cartoon feature without subtitles, and we're only reminded that this is unusual when somebody attending one of our screenings for the first time staggers out with glazed eyes after a half-hour. Over a four-year period you pick up a number of standard phrases such as "Look out!", "Hurry up!", and "Here comes the monster!" The animated cinema of any country tends to feature fantasy and fast action rather than a lot of static scenes (if a story consists primarily of people talking to each other, it's usually cheaper to film it live than to animate it); and as long as there's a lot of action, it's easy enough to figure out in pantomime what's going on. As Wally Wood put it, "There are good guys and bad guys and the job of the good guys is to kill the bad guys!" — and you don't have to understand the dialogue to figure out which is which.

No, unfortunately there are virtually no English translations of

Japanese comics, but this is more a financial matter than a cultural one. It's true that very liberal translations would have to be made, and in most cases the artwork would have to be flipped (printed in mirror image) to make it read in the proper sequence for Occidentals. Also, many of the best Japanese comics are plotted as comic-art novels of several hundred pages. Kimba runs about 640 pages. And they're all black & white, which one American publisher has complained makes even the most adult of them look more like kids' coloring books than real comics. And there are numerous panels in which Japanese sound effects (the equivalent of "Wham!" and "Ka-BOOM!") are worked into the art, so extensive retouching would be required. All in all, everyone feels it would cost tremendously more to prepare an English-language edition than the limited market (the comic art intelligensia, essentially those who buy the undergrounds) would support.

Yes, the Astro Boy series is available complete in 22 volumes from Sun Comics, published by Asahi Sonorama. The series has been edited, with some panels redrawn, into Tezuka's approved definitive edition. Astro Boy is also being published by Kodansha in a series called The Complete works of Osamu Tezuka, unretouched and in the original chronological order, and with a one-page English story synopsis at the beginning of each volume. However, the Complete Works set costs about $1.00 a volume more than the Sun Comics set. Complete Works also has Kimba the White Lion, The Amazing Three, Space Giants, and Tezuka's original Monkey King comic on which the animated feature Alakazam the Great was based. Books Nippan, 532 West Sixth Street, Los Angeles, Ca. 90014 has all of these available by mail order, but you'll have to ask for them under their original Japanese titles: Tetsuwan Atom (Mighty Atom), Junguru Taitei (Jungle Emperor), Wonder Three, Magma Taishi (Ambassador Magma), and Son-Goku the Monkey.

American fans have been trying for the past couple of years to convince the Japanese cartoon companies to present their works to cable TV, but unfortunately their business offices persist on knocking on the doors of the big networks where the major money is. We hope they'll soon admit they aren't getting anywhere that way and go to cable TV, where they stand their only serious chance of making a sale.

One other possibility is to try to get onto the college art-theatre circuit. Allegro Non Troppo and Fantastic Planet have been circulating there for years. Market some of the TV half-hour SF adventures to the campus beer halls and pizza parlors that have nightly screenings of W.C. Fields two-reelers and movie serials. But neither of these ideas promises a sufficient immediate financial return to cover the cost of dubbing an entire feature or 20+ half-hour episodes into English.

Yes, there are soft-porn cartoons. The most popular in Japan was probably Cutie Honey, a SF comedy about a super-heroine who usually got her clothes ripped off at least once per episode.

—F.P.

Donna Upshaw
East Chicago, Indiana

I agree with you about the fact that *Star Blazers* and *Battle of the Planets* are too mature for the kids American TV stations show them to. I mean, when *Battle* shows the ten-year-old G-Forcer rescuing a girl whom he finds is wearing only a towel, and *Star Blazers* has the hero hugging his girlfriend while she is clad in slip and boots, you kind of get the feeling these aren't kid shows!

Landon Chesney
Chattanooga, Tennessee

I wish I could say I was overwhelmed by *Fanfare* #3. For some reason I found it curiously flat. James Van Hise, I think has a point. Only it's not that the selection of subjects is inappropriate. What bothers me is their relative lack of depth. The fresh insight or unusual angle that might justify taking up mundane topics like beauty pageants is what's missing. If the article in question didn't tell me anything more than what I might have surmised, then the article is a failure. This is not to say it wasn't well written. In any other context it's perfectly adequate reporting. Somehow you expect something more than just adequate reporting in *Fanfare*. Maybe it's the fannish slant that's missing.

I wouldn't have been any more surprised than Van Hise to find the *Fanfare* #2 Golddiggers piece, just as it was written, in an issue of *Rona Barrett's Hollywood*. What would have surprised me would be finding it written like, say, Richard Kyle wrote "The Education of Victor Fox" in the early 1960s fanzine *Xero*. Maybe that's an unfair example, but I think it serves to make the point. Kyle took what was arguably the worst comic line of the Golden Age—the one that least merited scholarly attention—and, through the flawed lens of Victor Fox's view of the world, extracted an article that was extraordinarily revelatory. It wasn't about the Fox line at all. What it was about was cynicism in commerce. I would think the same sort of thing could be done with almost any subject, but areas like beauty contests and professional dance teams would be especially ripe.

In lieu of psychological insight, there should at least be an element of humor. I remember running across an article on Albert Payson Terhune in *Sports Illustrated* about fifteen years ago. Terhune made his mark decades earlier by writing a series of children's books about intrepid collies, the foremost of which was entitled *Lad: A Dog*. A very unlikely subject for a sports magazine. In spite of odds to the contrary, the article turned out to be absolutely stunning. I've always regretted not keeping it. The general tone would be something similar to taking, say, the career of *The Hardy Boys* author F.W. Dixon and telling not only something about his life but the era in which he lived as well. Along with Kyle's piece it was a classic textbook example of how to extract significance, with tongue in cheek, from a subject that should be hopelessly off the wall.

Abbott and Costello, for instance, are hopelessly off the wall. It wasn't their fault they were ill-served by their material most of the time. But an article *(Fanfare* #2) that sets out to prove they were really better than they seemed to be, then actually winds up demonstrating they were ill-served by their material (which we already knew) is not only misrepresenting itself but redundant as well. It's this kind of approach that's worthy of Rona Barrett. The headline says Tab and Natalie were discovered in bed together, but the article reveals they were only making a movie.

Maybe I wasn't sure of which direction you were going until now. It goes without saying that the final criterion is whether or not the material sells. If what you're doing sells, I wouldn't change a thing. It's easy to criticize from an ivory-tower position. Ideally we'd all like to see a fanzine that's commercially successful as well.

Apropos of nothing in particular, I happened to be thinking about the lack of plotting and logical character motivation that is becoming more and more common today in movies. I think there is definitely a trend toward half-assed plot development in modern films. There are several areas that might be worth exploring in an article. Foremost would be "why?" Lack of pride in craft, or have we reached the point where narrative as such can be dispensed with? Part of the answer would be that there is nothing new about dud movies. But in the 1930s and '40s the bombs were relegated to the bottom half of double bills and, eventually, forgotten. Now they play first run theaters and gather rave reviews. Even more puzzling is that the contemporary audience sits still for this nonsense.

A 1940s audience would have hooted something like Antonioni's *Blowup* off the screen. *Blowup* preceded Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* as the first of the non-plot films of any major consequence. The "mystery" posed in the first half of *Blowup* was never resolved. A photographer detects what appears to be a hand holding a gun in the background of a picture he's taken in a park. Only a minute detail on the original negative, it reveals itself as a gun after successive stages of enormous enlargements. Then the protagonist becomes sidetracked on some unrelated rigamarole — only to wind up, at the film's conclusion, watching a troupe of mimes playing an imaginary game of tennis on a deserted court. This struck me as a cop-out of some kind, not unlike that of *2001*'s ending.

But I was also reminded of a more than casual similarity of the photo enlargement gimmick to a 1948 James Stewart flick, *Call Northside 777*. Stewart saves Richard Conte from the chair by enlarging a news photo to such gigantic proportions that the hands on the face of a watch can be read, thus confirming the innocent Conte's alibi.

The first half of *Blowup* had the makings of a fairly decent suspense thriller. The last half was existential claptrap. If I'm not wrong in my recollection, none of the reviews mentioned the fact that Antonioni's "plot" was a rip-off of the earlier film. So it was really a cheat both ways. The McGuffin originated with somebody else, and Antonioni didn't have the ability to think up a different resolution.

Bruce Dickson
Los Angeles, California

Thanks for *Fanfare* #3. I had given up thoughts of contact with you, so it was at least as nice to receive something from you as it was to receive another of your blissfully enigmatic zines.

Part of me was all ready to be sucked back into writing "printable comments." It's easy for me to write that way. However, it puts me into a lofty, abstract place I feel through with. Among other things, producing that kind of writing was a lonely, fortified castle. I don't choose to return there, friend. I'm responding in the most personable way I can for my sanity; print anything or nothing. (Obviously I haven't let go of this concern yet.)

After reading the letters in #3, most everything I thought to add

had been said. So here are my dittos or votes for the comics topics:

The time for the graphic story novel that "says" something is gone.

TV as it has been, and home video as it is/will be, can easily wipe out what's left of Marvel and DC, head comix, etc. Few regrets.

Yes, I have let go of expectations about the future of graphic stories. Addressing the issue became redundant for me.

The time seems appropriate to move on, even if we're unsure as to what.

Fanfare seems to cover too much, we no longer know what it's trying to do.

Jarring transitions. Needs direction.

Favorite article, pick two: Japanese animation and letters section.

So why do your magazines excite me so much, friend? There are other comics and sf zines. Since *Starlog* split two for one and costs a fortune, I haven't seen anything I've cared about. So what is it? Maybe I'm prejudiced, Bill, but I really feel you go 100% into your creations. That's the highest compliment I know how to give to creative people. I said it about the early *Starlog,* too. Being commercial can simply mean you had lots of money to be creatively and personally lazy. So far I can't remember feeling that with your magazines.

The quixotic aspect of *Fanfare* concerns me also. If you're looking for direction, and a recognizable readership, why not insert a questionnaire-mailer with issues? You could ask "What would you like more of?" and "What would you like less of?" questions and get more broad-based feedback.

Sociological puzzles hook me sometimes. One of them is the hardcore fan. I don't know for sure, but I suspect hardcore sf/comics/movies/TV fans may be typical of hardcore fans of many genres. What makes him or her tick? Myself and all my friends for a period of years seemed to be classic hardcore fans and proud of it. How did we get that way? And for those of us who graduated into other activities—what changed?

The most objectivity I've received on a word level came from a book about infants. It said that amassing a huge collection like I did—creating a world on my own terms to live in—was like making the world come to me. Why? Because inside me, emotionally I didn't feel adequate to go out and meet the world on *its* terms. If I could have done that then, I might not have been so compulsive in creating one of my own.

It's too soon for me still to be completely free about fans and fandom, but for what it's worth, *Fanfare* looks to me like the most overt representation yet of that all-embracing media world I and other fans were building around ourselves. Food for thought.

Thomas Egan
Woodside, New York

The shotgun approach of your contents has many good points. It allows you to touch all types of minor areas in media art. You can go from the past-tense futurism of "1984—Tomorrow's World Today" to the satire (??) of Jane See White's (a pseudonym?) article on beauty pageants (created by the commercialism of Coney Island of the 1920s) which, despite its subtle humor on human pretentiousness, masks the all too real tragedy of many girls who go from one pageant to another, let alone the increasing scandals that have attended the pageant business.

Your best features were Fred Patten's article on TV animation in Japan and the magnificent photo article on Polish sculptor Szukalski. The author of the Japanese animation tradition is the West, especially the U.S.A. Look at all the animation figures. They are *Western* in facial features, not Oriental. Japanese success here seems to imply a negative attitude to their own culture in this regard.

Fred Patten did one great job of research. Photo reproductions are all excellent. The photos of the feature *The Age of Big Dinosaurs* by Toei Animation were fantastic. He mentioned Top Craft studio in Japan, which did much of the animation work for Rankin/Bass' Tolkien features *The Hobbit* (1977) and *Return of the King* (1980). Two of the Japanese illustrators for the art book Rankin/Bass put out are mentioned as Tsuguyuki Kubo and Minoru Nishida (Ballantine's paperback edition of *The Hobbit*). I presume they belong to Top Craft. Considering the criticism Rankin/Bass gained from Tolkien fans for their animation feature, I wonder what the reaction would have been if the producers had used a better animation company such as Toei.

The Polish sculptor Szukalski is one great artist. He seems to combine a fierce nationalism for Poland with an equally fierce compassion for the human condition of the individual who has to suffer in this modern world. I don't know enough about Frank Lloyd Wright to tell whether Szukalski was "right" or "wrong," but his florid sculpture embraces both fantasy and realism; a baroque quality, too. No hint, though, of any Graeco-Roman influence. It overflows with the idea of "sub-creation," to stretch the limits of the natural world until it merges with the feel of epic fantasy. None of his figures seem "happy" or satisfied. They show pain and sorrow, but fierce pride and dignity, too, in their very being — body and soul together. I hope Poland gains that freedom which Szukalski embodies in his savage but wonderful piece, *Coq Gaulois* (Rooster of Gaul). She and her native son deserve it.

For Kenneth Anger, I hope his fascination with black magic and Satanists like Aleister Crowley will not make him disappear (Psychically, of course) into some Devil's Triangle of the mind. The occult is *not* a good influence for any filmmaker, or indeed any right-thinking individual. Mystery in life isn't mystification.

● *Jane See White's hatchet job on beauty pageants wasn't satire or, I doubt, written under a pseudonym. It was an Associated Press feature slanted toward the negative side of beauty contests — a trendy point of view in the midst of anti-"sexism" promoted by national media. To that end the article had clear-cut intentions, but wasn't very well written. In the version that ran in newspapers, paragraphs near the end repeated information already stated at the beginning and middle. Structure of the piece was choppy — seemingly the result of a novice/writer who did considerable research and interviewing, only to grapple with the job of organizing it all (perhaps under deadline pressure) and not having the journalistic capacity to bring it off effectively. AP probably edited it down from a larger report. Fanfare's reprint cut it by about 20% (some digressive, fuggheaded paragraphs were ejected) and a few snide adjectives were deleted.*

The purpose of running this article and the shorter one with it was to show two different attitudes toward a media entertainment institution often accused of being the basest example of commerce exploiting the individual. More likely it's a perfect form of mutual exploitation. No one twists a girl's arm to enter a pageant. It could be argued that the same girl, by entering a pageant, sets out to exploit the system for her own personal gain.

A strange editorial faux pas got by in the parlay of following this article with the 1-pager on THE WORLD OF BEAUTY PAGEANTS magazine. It occurred too late (after typesetting and layout) that the anti-pageant writer and the pro-pageant magazine publisher have the same last name and the same first initial. Should any suspicion or confusion exist over the editorial pairing of this odd couple, let it be known that Associated Press writer Jane See White and publisher-entrepreneur J. Nolan White are not related.

—Bill Spicer

Bruce V. Kalnins
Willowdale, Ontario Canada

Congratulations on *Fanfare* #3! What I especially enjoyed about this particular issue was T. Casey Brennan's article on Kenneth

RICHARD "GRASS" GREEN
2321 CHESTNUT STREET
FORT WAYNE, IND. 46803
6/20/80

I almost cracked up laffin' when I saw that you'd printed my letter (fo'nettix on' AWL) AND the silly illos (that one chick at the end of the line made me guffaw--man, I doodl so much I f'get wot I do)!

Hey, man— Guys can say what they wanna about FANFARE's format, but I think I really DIG onnit, now. I haven't read all of it yet, as usual, but then, I'm not SUPPOSED to read all of it; only what strikes my fancy the mostest (is you listenin', Van Hise?).

I DOES has a criticism, tho— Xx I think the BACK cvr of #3 sh'd have been on the front. It woulda made a MUCH more beautiful cvr than what you used. HOWEVER; I have no ideer of what you shoulda then used for the back cvr, cuz what you USED for the front cvr woulda notta looked as good as a back cvr. —What'm I trying to say? Hmmm.

And be-LESS you for all the SHORTIES! Being both black, AND an entertainer, you just KNOW I enjoyed that superb shorty on SLIM GAILLARD! It was QUITE informative for me. Loved it. Disconcerting to learn that there are OTHER FanFares.. I'ne nevah had no Chinese cookies.. HOORAY f'Iron Man; I hope he stays on the wagon (his being an alcoholic was REALLY news to me: You wouldn't beLEEB how long it's been since I bought a comic!).. The Manthing article looks VERY interesting; I'll probly get to it soon.. 1984, like much SF eludes my lower mentality. As a matter of fact, of all the pictures, I only liked about 3, but didn't understand 'm. LOVED the beauty queen pix (who's Jane See White? --When angry, Grass see red).. To be honest, Bill Elder, tho he is a terrific artsit--er--artist, has never made it to my personal rank of faves. However, I do NOT deny the man credit as a super-star artist. What I'm glad of izzat the article was almost as much about Harv Kurtzman (one of my uppermost faves) as about Bill! The way he lavishes praise on Harvey, tho, makes me really ADMIRE him as a man, person and human being. As you know, there are a lotta glory hogs, who can draw up a storm, but unfortunately have the personality of an ego-maniac.

Anger. I have long been a fan of Anger's, having seen many of his films twice, some even three or four times. And, since having read a number of books on the occult in general, and Aleister Crowley in particular—a figure who has had, from all accounts, a great influnence on Anger's life—I have been able to appreciate his work that much more.

Within the past two years I have delved into the occult, reading a fairly wide range of material from witchcraft to psychic phenomena, but finding myself increasingly drawn to the figure of Aleister Crowley. I have the following books by him: *The Book of the Law; Gems From the Equinox; Magick in Theory and Practice; Liber Aleph; The Confessions of Aleister Crowley; Diary of a Drug Fiend; The Book of Thoth; Magical and Philosophical Commentaries on the Book of the Law.* I also have Israel Regardie's biography on Crowley entitled *The Eye in the Triangle.* Plus K. Grant's book on him and his teachings, particularly in the realm of Sex Magick entitled *The Hidden God.* I cannot say I have read all of these books but, even if I had, it would not mean much, for one has to intensively study Crowley, constantly cross-referencing one work with another. Crowley's works exhibit moments of utter brilliance. Unfortunately this tends to be the exception rather than the rule, for a great deal of what he wrote appears disjointed and indicative of a seeming inability to clearly and forcefully follow an idea to its logical conclusion — a result, it appears, of the large quantities of drugs he consumed throughout his life.

Needless to say, as my familiarity with Crowley and his thoughts grew, I was able to see how greatly Anger had been influenced by him in his films — especially *Invocation of My Demon Brother* and *Lucifer Rising.* (Has he finally finished that film?) In an encyclopedia on magic and the supernatural which I picked up in the library one day, I came across a photo of Anger taken back in 1953-54 at the abbey in Cefalo (Sicily) where Crowley established for a brief period of time a colony dedicated to carrying out, on a daily basis, the teachings of *The Book of the Law.* In fact, Anger was responsible for uncovering some of the erotic murals which Crowley and his followers had painted on the walls of the abbey.

T. Casey Brennan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

After reading Bruce Kalnins' letter on myself, Anger and Crowley, I thought I would draft this reply.

First of all, my admiration of Ken Anger and his works notwithstanding, I would not recommend the study of Aleister Crowley to anyone. I spent many years studying, writing and publishing in that field. I have dropped the entire matter, and if—a very big if—I do any further mystical writing, it will not be related to Crowley. Crowley was brilliant, and a thorough chronicler of the field of the occult, but the study of his works seems to misdirect the reader into a kind of fanatical madness — as bad or worse than fundamentalist Christianity. Anger is certainly an exception, I should hasten to point out. At the risk of seeming gullible, and something other than the coldhearted, practical realist I am today, I would advise against *any* study of the Kabbalah (the focal point of Crowley's work, though his concept embraced ideas far removed from Judaism), until one is middleaged and "standing on firm ground." I wasn't ready in 1973 when I took up Crowleyanity, and I'm not ready now.

Those who would disregard my advice can read some of my fiction in the forthcoming hardcover Crowleyan collection *The Equinox,* Vol. 5, #3 (Troll Publishing Co., PO Box 90213, Nashville, TN 37209). Some of my mystical poetry has been published (and is forthcoming) by the Theosophical Society in Bombay, India. For international buffs there were some issues of the fine Japanese journal PHP, in Tokyo, featuring my essays, before its unfortunate demise.

But all in all, that world and that philosophy is far behind me. Currently I am putting my affairs together for a trip to the Netherlands. My lovely and gracious friend, Xaviera Hollander, has invited me to stay at her home for a while; it will be a much needed vacation. She made the invitation on the phone recently; I feel very honored to have her personal phone number in Holland, and consider her a far better anarchist than Crowley.

As for comics by me forthcoming (as Kalnins asked in a separate letter), I'm told that my name is held in very low regard by the current crop of comic book editors, all of whom are beneath me socially, in case they don't know it. An exception is Gary Groth, who used one of my articles in *The Comics Journal* #57, and says he is going to use my scripts in something eventually. Another is Bill Black, who drew my new 1940s style Phantom Lady story in *Fem Fantastic* #3. Also, I should have something coming in Bill Dale Marcinko's *Afta.*

J. Fred Walker
Seattle, Washington

I was surprised (to get right to my vanity here) to see Jon Pearl's letter about my article. *["Roots Country Style," issue #2]* And flattered. But I liked even more the guy from Texas who wrote "forget it." That means the article was either absolutely terrible or it pushed a raw nerve somewhere. I love to touch those raw nerves. And I know the article was wonderful.

On *Fanfare* #3 — well done, and keep doing it. I particularly liked the one illo cover instead of the multi-panel. A cover should be striking with one bolt. I think this one was. Kurtzman had that down to a T in *Mad* comics. Even the title was short and BIG. Congrats on your choice of illo, too. It's a grabber. Short and sweet, the mag is looking better and better. Keep that liberal policy going, too. The feedback reads good in the letters section.

I have a few comments about Rock 'n' Roll that I think you will agree need to be said . . .

I would venture to assert that Rock 'n' Roll has acquired the status of a Religion. Rock 'n' Roll has gone beyond Pop and become a national youth culture. Then beyond that, a religion and a philosophy spanning the 15 to 50 age group. It may be the one hope in the western world in the teeth of "Soviet aggression."

If you listen to Mexican music you hear the word "coracon," which roughly translates to variations of: Heart, Sweetheart, Heart of My Life, etc. This is a stock word in all heavy Mexican love songs — the most outstanding word in the vocabulary of Mexican song writers. It is no different with current pop rock (with the pop rock genre of writers): The use of the catch-all "rock 'n' roll" is so redundant that it has taken on the aspect of a religious liturgy. I say it has become a substitute for religion. and, a substitute or surrogate release for S-E-X. Billy Joel is glib testimony to this fact. Rock 'n' roll was a symbol of rebellion which by now has become a sacred cow of its own. Young kids today freak out on rock 'n' roll that was out of date 10 to 20 years ago, and don't even know they are listening to reruns, redos and revamps of the originals. The use of the words "rock 'n' roll" has become so redundant in song writing today as to bleach out the original so completely that the value is invisible in terms of art. For example:

—"It's still rock 'n' roll to me."
—"Rock 'n' roll never forgets."
—"It's all part of my rock 'n' roll fantasy."
—"It's all part of my rock 'n' roll dream."
—"Make me clazy, dot lock 'n' lole" (Buddy Hackett, 1957).
—"Make me mo' clazy now!" (J. Fred Walker, 1981).

I'm sick of "rock 'n' roll" in lyrics.

The music keeps evolving and improving, and I love it. "The Sultans of Swing" rolls it without effort. Ironically, part of the lyric *has* "rock 'n' roll" in it. It seems to be that rock 'n' roll has become a substitute for sex, a substitute for religion — something to believe in, subliminally. Where the Holy Man has failed, where the true belief has washed out, where there is no refuge in life, there is always that *beat.* Like the *heart*beat. I feel strongly against the perversion of any art form. Commercialism is a bane. I'm not against pop, just commercialism eating off it.

Jonathan Pearl
Los Angeles, California

James Van Hise's superficial criticisms of Fred Walker's "Roots Country Style" (Fanfare Forum #3) make me wonder whether the folks at *Rocket's Blast Comicollector* ever read anything that doesn't have the dialogue placed in bubbles. In fact, Van Hise appears shut off in a bubble of his own, oblivious to the notion that many people might find authentic music of the hills and prairies as meaningful a form of expression as, say, *Metamorpho* or *the Silver Surfer.* Fred tried to give some deserved credit to the pioneers of country music. A clear distinction was made at all times between the Real McCoy and the refined drivel peddled by today's Nashville music industry.

Keep in mind that I'm the fellow who blasted *Fanfare* #2 as not having much substance. Issue #3 was a great improvement, containing no articles where you have to read through half a page about the author's sex life (or lack of one) in order to get some new information ("Groucho & Us," *Fanfare* #2).

This style of Bozo Journalism reached its high water mark in an *Esquire* cover story purportedly about actor Robert Blake. Author Harry Crews quickly revealed his ignorance about Blake by letting it slip out that he never knew that the star of "Baretta" once appeared in "Our Gang" comedies under his real name, Mickey Gubitosi. But then Crews was really more concerned with letting readers know about some lady down Louisiana way who's always "good for him."

Mike Cane
New York City, New York

I am responding to a notice that appeared at the close of an excerpt from Mr. Stanislaus Szukal-

ski's autobiography. The excerpt was titled "When Wright Was Wrong," and appeared in the third issue of *Fanfare*. The notice stated that Glenn Bray will be publishing a monography devoted to the works of Mr. Szukalski, titled *Troughful of Pearls*. I would appreciate information regarding how I might go about ordering a copy.

This is the first time I have seen the works of Mr. Szukalski, and I am absolutely overwhelmed by his work. Never before have I seen a sculptor capture such naked dynamism, such raw life, and such commanding power. I am in awe of "Yaltanal," (published as *Fanfare's* frontispiece), "Birth of Thought," and "Struggle." If possible, please convey to Mr. Szukalski my deepest gratitude for the nobility of his work — and especially for his uncompromising stand he wrote of in his excerpt.

If possible, could you also inform me as to how I might obtain copies of Mr. Szukalski's two previous monographs, *The Works of Szukalski*, and *Projects*. Additionally, any and all information you could send to me regarding other published works devoted to Mr. Szukalski, as well as any exhibitions of his works, would be greatly appreciated.

I look forward to receiving any information you might supply me with, and again express my deepest gratitudes for the magnificent works of Mr. Szukalski.

● *"The Works of Szukalski" (Covici-McGee, 1923) and "Projects" (Chicago University Press, 1929) would be hard to come by today because of their limited pressruns, but you might locate them through a book search service. Glenn Bray's recently-published "Troughful of Pearls" contains some of the works found in the earlier two volumes, along with current ideas of design, sculpture and new projects for monuments, spanning the artist 's work from 1912 to 1979. Two full-color plates, a tipped-in illustration, and a 7-inch LP record insert featuring a 15-minute commentary by Szukalski. "Troughful of Pearls" is 11"x12", 176 pages, available in softcover for $15.00 (plus $1.50 postage) and in a hardcover limited signed edition for $75.00 (postpaid) from Glenn Bray , P.O. Box 4482, Sylmar, California 91342.* —Bill

Jim Dapkus
Westfield, Wisconsin

With regards to "1984" in *Fanfare* #3, I feel a lot of it will be missed by a younger audience, as I had to explain a large portion of it to a 20 year old model (I'm a professional photographer) who picked up the magazine in my studio. Could it be that I am well read in the literature and pulps of the 1930s/40s/50s (though by no means an expert) and have a base to draw from rather than her seeing the prints, probably for the first time in her life? Also, I can recall finding a hair brush with one of those pictures of a rocketship on the handle and the caption reading "Spaceship of the 1970s" — and that was about five years ago. As I grow older (I'm 28) I see a lot of the "new" stuff isn't new at all, and what I remember as a kid isn't as farfetched as it seemed then.

Arthur C. Scott
Cupertino, California

Fred's article on Japanese animation was terrific, and just the sort of thing I'd like to see FANFARE do more of. If I have reservations about the zine thus far, it's mainly to do with the stuff that is (or might just as well be) newspaper supplement type material, like the K-tel and beauty contest articles. I'm all for expanding out of the comic book ghetto, and seeing material on all sorts of popular media, but it seems to me a zine like yours could subsist entirely on material that derives from the fannish consciousness. By which I mean, material developed in specialized areas by enthusiast-scholars, stuff not covered (or at least not knowledgably) by supplement feature writers. I'm struck by the contrast between the substantial stuff that has appeared in the mag (Fred's piece, Mark's Groucho article), and the other stuff, the syndicated features that strike me as filler — taking space that would be better devoted to more articles by the Pattens, Evaniers and Spicers.

Richard Pachter
Miramar, Florida

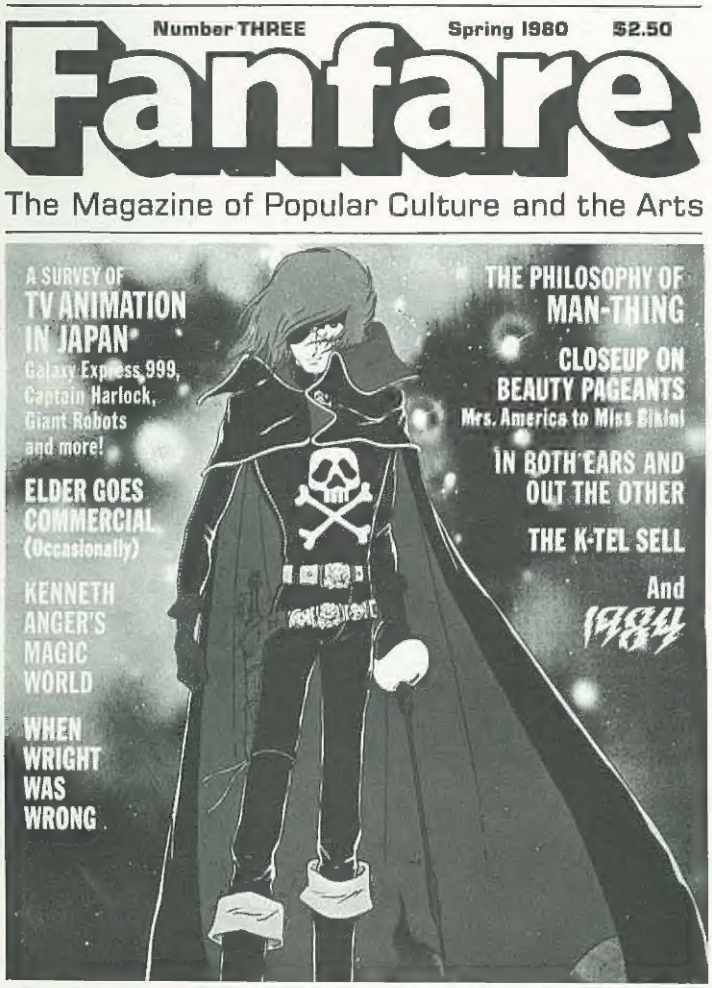
I was pleasantly surprised to see two articles on the record business. Robert Hilburn's bit on K-tel was well done and informative. Bob Theissen's piece on the state of the music business was another matter entirely. To put it bluntly, this guy doesn't know what he's talking about. I have neither the time, energy or inclination to catalog all the errors, but let me briefly deal with a few of the dumber ones.

First of all, every label signs new acts and drops old ones. This is nothing new. Certainly record companies are selective about which acts they retain. Why should they do otherwise, unless there is exceptional music being made? Warner Bros. has held onto Ry Cooder, for example, who is not a big seller. A&M continues to actively promote Joan Armatrading despite less-than-stupendous sales. Both artists are unique and their artistic contributions outweigh their non-platinum sales, at least in the eyes of the label's executives.

Theissen's got the chronology of Exile (not the Exiles) all wrong, too. They were on Wooden Nickel Records before Warner Bros., not the other way around. And the "oil shortage," if there ever was one, hardly affected the pressing capabilities of the industry to the extent Theissen's article implied.

The most galling part of the piece for me was the half-assed comments about Supertramp. Had the writer even the most basic knowledge of the record business, he'd have known that Supertramp has been a long-term project with A&M, starting in earnest in 1974 with the *Crime of the Century* album. *Breakfast in America* was a much-anticipated record by radio, retail and the public. The fact that the writer heard it on the air frequently only substantiates that. Radio stations, for better or worse, are on the air to make money by attracting listeners and selling advertising, and they're not going to play anything heavily unless the song or artist is popular or the station believes it soon will be. The accompanying vigorous promotion on the part of A&M was there because the music was very good and the interest in it was high. If the company neglected obvious merchandising strategies then they'd be neglecting their business and Supertramp's music.

I should point out that I am an employee of A&M Records, but whether I work for Buddah Records, Columbia, or even Burger King, I have to deal with reality. Next time you run another such article, please try to get a writer who does the same.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Our 64-page third issue is still available, containing a wide spectrum of features including Szukalski's memoir on Frank Lloyd Wright (see above letter) plus Fanfare Forum and innumerable Short Subjects. This back issue is almost sold out, so order yours now — $3.50 postpaid, while they last. **FANFARE, 329 North Avenue 66, Los Angeles CA 90042.**